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ABSTRACT

This report analyzes the problems of black males in Prince George's County (Maryland) and makes recommendations for improvement in the schools and the community. Inadequate funding, lack of a multicultural curriculum, and a shortage of African American role models were identified as the major school factors that place young black males at risk. Recommendations for school change include the following: (1) increase the level of school funding; (2) replace the Eurocentric curriculum with a multicultural curriculum; (3) increase the number of minority group school staff; (4) ensure that a majority of all minority groups have access to and succeed in advanced levels of the curriculum; (5) study the impact of special education policies and practices; (6) increase support to disadvantaged families; (7) strengthen mentoring and internship programs; and (8) extend the school year from 10 to 11 months. The following recommendations for community action are made: (1) elect public officials whose records support public education; (2) provide increased opportunities for African American youth to learn about themselves in their homes and community associations; (3) increase support for student achievement by establishing learning centers in local churches and youth activity centers; and (4) define, communicate, and model the values and behaviors essential to realizing success. Statistical data are presented in 43 tables. A list of 42 references is appended. (FMW)

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BLACK MALE ACHIEVEMENT: FROM PERIL TO PROMISE

Report of the Superintendent's Advisory Committee on Black Male Achievement

Dr. John A. Murphy
Superintendent
PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY
PUBLIC SCHOOLS
UPPER MARLBORO, MARYLAND

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Black Male Achievement: From Peril to Promise

Report of the Superintendent's Advisory Committee on Black Male Achievement

Wayne J. Curry
Committee Chair

John A. Murphy
Superintendent of Schools

Report prepared by:
Warren Simmons
Michael Grady

Prince George's County Public Schools
Upper Marlboro, Maryland

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REFERENCES

SUPERINTENDENT'S ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON BLACK MALE ACHIEVEMENT

Wayne K. Curry, Esquire
Committee Chairman
Chairman, Prince George's County Chamber of Commerce

Ms. Beverly Beander
President
Prince George's County
Council of PTA's

Mr. Reginald Dunn
Senior Vice President
OAO Corporation

Dr. William E. Kirwan
President
University of Maryland,
College Park

Ms. Jill Moss Greenberg
Multicultural Education
Programs Coordinator
Mid-Atlantic Equity Center
American University

Mr. Sam Saxton
Director
Prince George's County
Department of Corrections

Mr. Wallace O. Stephens
President
Stephens Engineering Company

Mr. Ralph T. Clark
Chairman, Prince George's
County Public School's
Business & Industry
Council

Ms. Sarah J. Johnson
Member
Prince George's County Board
of Education

Dr. James Lyons
President
Bowie State University

Ms. Manerva Riddick
Consultant
Maryland Natural Gas

Reverend Perry A. Smith, III
Pastor
First Baptist Church
of North Brentwood

Dr. Alvin Thornton
Associate Dean
College of Liberal Arts
Howard University

PREFACE

For the past three years, the status of African-American males, particularly those between the age of 15 and 30, has been a source of growing concern across the country. Parents, community leaders and politicians alike have been troubled by disproportionately high rates of homicide, suicide and imprisonment among young black males, high unemployment rates for black teenagers and adults, and a decline in the percentage of African-American males who enroll in, and successfully complete, college. While these statistics do not characterize the experience of the majority of African-American males, they do reveal that the path to success for a sizable number of black males continues to be blocked by poverty, drug and alcohol abuse, poor health care, inadequate housing, crime, and low educational achievement.

Most of these barriers -- poverty, poor schooling, inadequate health care and housing -- are not new to the black community. They represent hurdles which African-Americans have worked to surmount throughout their history in this country. The larger society in which African-Americans live and compete, however, has changed in ways that make factors such as poor schooling and inadequate housing more formidable than ever. Today's high school drop-out, for example, has far fewer options than his or her counterpart during the 1970's. Earnings have not kept pace with the skyrocketing costs of housing leaving many families homeless while others devote most of their income to housing and have little left for basic necessities such as food, child care and health care. These conditions make the effects of poverty and inadequate schooling more pernicious, and underlie the distress caused by the problems experienced by a small but growing number of African-American men.

In communities where the economic, social and educational fortunes of African-American males have been particularly hard hit, citizen groups have formed to identify ways to bolster black male achievement. New Orleans, Louisiana (see Garibaldi et al., 1988) and Milwaukee, Wisconsin (see African-American Male Task Force/Milwaukee Public Schools, 1990) are among the growing number of communities that have sought local solutions to what is now a national problem.

Unfortunately, the African-American community in Prince George's County has not been immune to negative forces affecting blacks elsewhere. Prince George's County community groups such as the Committee of 100, the County Council of PTA's, the NAACP, members of the Board of Education, and elected officials have been acutely aware of, and concerned about, underachievement found among many African-American males.

As Superintendent of Prince George's County Public Schools, Dr. John A. Murphy was keenly aware of the disparity between the potential and performance of many black male students, and the need to find solutions to this disturbing problem. To propel this process, he invited a diverse group of community leaders to explore what the school system could do to enhance black male achievement in and outside the school system. This group included a prominent member of the clergy, the president of the County Council of Parents and Teachers Associations (PTA), a former chairman of the local Chamber of Commerce, the presidents of the University of Maryland and Bowie State University, and leaders of the local business community.

At the group's first meeting, which was held in December, 1989, Dr. Murphy documented everyone's concerns by presenting school system data which revealed that African-American males fared more poorly on a variety of school achievement indicators (e.g., grade-point average, school suspensions, drop-out rate, etc.) than did other groups of students (i.e., white males, white females and African-American females). Data depicting the experience of black males in the community were equally worrisome. Statistics furnished by county agencies (Police and Health Departments, Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission, the Commission for Children, Youth and Families, and the County Executive's Office) demonstrated that African-American males comprised the overwhelming majority of homicide victims, individuals arrested for felonies and misdemeanors, and people receiving treatment for drug and alcohol abuse. These findings echoed the results of national studies on the status of African-American male, and left most of those present stunned by the range and severity of the problems facing young African-American males.

The harsh realities drawn by local and national data dispelled some initial concerns that a committee studying black male achievement might do more harm than good by reinforcing negative stereotypes about African-Americans. The Superintendent's presentation and the discussion which followed reinforced the group's feeling that unless current conditions were changed, they could undermine the foundation built by previous generations of African-Americans. By the end of the first meeting, the group accepted Dr. Murphy's call for an advisory committee that would:

1. Identify the causes of the relatively poor school performance of African-American males; and

2. Describe what should be done to reverse negative trends and build upon existing strengths.

Mr. Wayne K. Curry, former Chair of the Prince George's County Chamber of Commerce, agreed to chair the Black Male Achievement Committee. To further the committee's work, Dr. Murphy selected a group of school staff to provide data and information concerning student achievement, school system policy and central office organization. This team was led by Dr. Warren Simmons, director of the school system's Department for Equity Assurance Programs. The names and responsibilities of team members are listed on the next page.

SCHOOL SYSTEM SUPPORT TEAM

Dr. Warren Simmons
Staff Officer for the Black Male Achievement Committee and
Director, Department of Equity Assurance Programs

Mrs. Nancy Bishop
Director, Staff Development
Division of Instruction

Dr. Carolyn Blue
Director, Personnel

Mr. John Brown
Supervisor, Program
Development
Division of Instruction

Dr. Jerome Clark
Associate Superintendent,
Division of Human
Resources and Personnel

Dr. Michael Grady
Director, Research and
Evaluation

Ms. Bonnie Jenkins
Director, Public Affairs

Ms. Jacquelyn Lendsey
Special Assistant to the
Superintendent

Dr. Louise F. Waynant
Associate Superintendent,
Division of Instruction

The Black Male Achievement Committee (BMAC) began its work by identifying critical issues and by developing a timeline for the completion of its work. The committee met, on average, three times a month and engaged in a range of activities which included:

- Holding a series of hearings to obtain the views of students, parents, community organizations, and school staff;
- Meeting with representatives of the Prince George's County government;
- Interviewing inmates and staff at the Prince George's County Correctional Center; and
- Interviewing central office staff to review student performance and achievement data, in light of school system programs and policies.

The committee's work was also guided by dialogues with local religious leaders and nationally recognized experts on education and child development. The latter group included Dr. Alvin Poussaint, Dr. John Ogbu and Dr. James P. Comer.

To assess factors influencing the performance of black males in PGCPS, the committee directed the School System Support Team to provide data describing:

- The role and function of various Central office divisions and departments;
- Racial/ethnic and gender characteristics of PGCPS central office and school-based staff;
- The school performance (e.g., standardized test scores, criterion-referenced test scores, grade point averages, drop-out rates and suspension rates) of African-American males compared to that of other students (African-American females, white females and white males); and
- The participation of African-American males in various curricular programs and levels (e.g., special education, compensatory education, Talented and Gifted Program, advanced placement classes, Magnet and Milliken Schools, advanced mathematics and science courses).

In the early stages of work, many of the committee's members were wary about how forthcoming the school system would be regarding requests for data. The extensive amount of information the committee received, only a portion of which is presented in this report, is a testimony to the commitment of the Superintendent and his staff.

As mentioned earlier, the experience of African-American males in the broader community was drawn from information furnished by county agencies such as the police department and the Prince George's County Correction's Center. These data, along with information provided by the school system, were viewed against a backdrop of national statistics.

The committe's report is presented in two parts. The committee's major findings and recommendations are presented in the first section of the report. Part II consist of six chapters which provide fuller analyses of the Prince George's County community and school system, the status of black males locally and nationally, and the challenges we face to ensure that African Americans fulfill their promise.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Communities across the country have been alarmed by the increasing difficulties experienced by a sizable number of African-American males. The problems confronting black males and the larger African-American community have been documented in a spate of national reports which show that African-American males are subject to higher suicide, homicide and incarceration rates than other groups, and experience lower levels of educational attainment.

The concerns of Prince George's County community groups (e.g., the Committee of 100 and the County Council of Parents and Teachers Associations) about the status of African-American males mirror those expressed nationally. In December, 1989, Dr. John A. Murphy, Superintendent of Prince George's County Public Schools, convened a group of community leaders to identify barriers to the achievement of African-American males and solutions to existing problems. This group agreed to become the Superintendent's Advisory Committee on Black Male Achievement and, for the past 6 months, has listened to the voices of teachers, students and parents, and analyzed hundreds of pages of information concerning student achievement, school staffing, and school policies. The committee's findings and recommendations are presented in a two part report. Part I contains major findings and recommendations, while Part II contains six chapters which provide further support for the conclusions and information presented in Part I.

The committee identified several factors which contribute to the problems encountered by African-American males. Inadequate school funding, the lack of multicultural curricula, instructional materials and library books, and a shortage of African-American role models among the school system's teaching and administrative staff were cited as major shortcomings. In addition, the committee underscored the overenrollment of black males in the school system's special education program and the organization and staffing of the Division of Pupil Services as problems warranting immediate attention. Other major findings touched on the following points:

- Out of 24 school systems in Maryland, Prince George's County ranks second lowest in per pupil expenditures for textbooks, second lowest in library resources, and lowest in dollars spent for instructional materials;

- A review of textbook lists and library catalogues revealed only a superficial rendering of the perspectives and experiences of African-Americans, women and other cultural groups;

- African-American males comprised only 6 percent of classroom teachers, and African-American staff, in general, were not represented in numbers needed to ensure that black and white students are exposed to positive African- American role models;

- Beginning in fourth grade, African-American males were grossly underrepresented in advanced academic groups and courses -- a pattern that worsened from fourth grade through high school such that in twelfth grade only 44 black males were enrolled in calculus, and in 10th grade, twice as many black males were enrolled in special education English classes as compared to the number of black English classes for the Talented and Gifted; and

- African-American males represent approximately one third of the total student enrollment, but comprise 47 percent of all students receiving special education services;

These startling findings led the Black Male Achievement Committee to submit the following recommendations for school change:

- Provide all schools with the level of resources now available in the Milliken II schools and increase significantly the allocation for books and materials.

- Replace what is now a Eurocentric curriculum with one that is multi-cultural.
- Recruit, hire and retain more African-American teachers, counselors and administrators, with an emphasis on increasing the presence of black males in our classrooms.

- Ensure that a majority of all student populations have access to and succeed in advanced levels of the curriculum.

- Establish a task force to examine the referral, assessment and treatment strategies used by the Special Education Program *vis a vis* their impact on black males.

- Offer increased support to families, especially those living in economically disadvantaged communities.

- Reorganize the Division of Pupil Services to facilitate greater coordination among the various departments.

- Develop a student information system that provides a broader view of student progress and performance.

- Strengthen mentoring and internship programs to forge stronger ties between academics and the world beyond high school.

- Extend the length of the school year for teachers from 10 to 11 months to provide more time for professional development and additional instructional time for students during the regular school year.

The Committee also conducted an analysis of community data, producing the following results:

- The public has not held its elected leaders responsible for providing the vision and resources needed to accomplish important education goals.
- Multicultural education is the joint responsibility of the family, the schools and the broader community.
- The community is responsible for reinforcing the view that academic excellence is an important goal and a viable life option for all students.

The Black Male Achievement Committee submits the following recommendations for community action:

- Elect candidates for public office whose positions and records are consistent with the long-term health of the public schools.
- Provide increased opportunities for African-American youth to learn about themselves in the home and in their community associations.
- Increase the community's support for student achievement by establishing learning centers in local churches and youth activity centers.
- Define, communicate and model the values and behaviors essential to realizing the promise of the youth of our community.

BLACK MALE ACHIEVEMENT COMMITTEE REPORT: FROM PERIL TO PROMISE

PART I

MAJOR FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

INTRODUCTION

The committee's work was motivated by a host of troubling findings concerning black males which have been reported in several recent publications such as, *A Common Destiny: Blacks and American Society* (National Research Council, 1989), *Educating Black Males: Issues and Strategies for Success* (Mid-Atlantic Equity Center, 1989), *Young, Black and Male in America: An Endangered Species* (Taylor Gibbs, 1988) and *Turning Points: Preparing American Youth for the 21st Century* (Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development, 1989). These sources reveal that:

- The college completion rate for black males decreased by 10.2 percent between 1976 and 1984;

- In 1986, 60 percent of all African-American students in college were women;

- Black females complete high school at a higher rate than their male counterparts;

- By the age of 13, 44 percent of black males are one or more years below grade level compared to 33 percent of black females, 30 percent of white males and 22 percent of white females;

- The teenage unemployment rate for black males (34 percent) is almost triple the unemployment rate for white males;

- The proportion of black men between the ages of 20 and 24 with no reported income increased from 8 percent in 1973 to 20 percent in 1984;

- In 1984, nine percent of black men 20 to 24 years of age were married and living with their spouses compared to 30 percent in 1974;

- Homicide is the number one cause of death among black males in the 15 to 30 year old age group;

- Suicide is the third leading cause of death among black males. In the 15-24 age group, the suicide rate for black males is over four times the rate for black females. The suicide rate for black males nearly tripled from 1960 to 1984;

- One out of every six black males will be arrested by the time he reaches age 19; and

- Black males represent six percent of the total population but comprise 40 percent of the prison population.

These trends have chilling implications for the well-being of both the African-American community and the whole of American society. While the black community suffers most immediately from the impact of lives and human potential lost to crime and inadequate education, the work of demographers such as Harold L. Hodgkinson (1985, 1989) shows that economic prosperity in this nation can no longer exist alongside high rates of unemployment and undereducation among African-Americans. Ultimately, no matter where one lives in these United States, the successes and failures of African-Americans, will be felt by all.

Prince George's County exemplifies the growing interdependence of racial and ethnic groups in the United States. Black Prince Georgians presently constitute half of the County's residents and more than 65 percent of the school system's enrollment. In a society made smaller by new communication and transportation technologies and interconnected industries, what once could be characterized as "their" problem arrives quickly at the doorstep of every citizen. The future of our community, then, is tied inextricably to the success of both its white and African-American citizens; the prosperity of each group depends on the well-being of the other. In the realm of education, schools that fail to provide an adequate education for black students will inevitably shortchange white students as well and erode the competitiveness of our entire society. In short, the fate of black, brown and white Americans, males and females alike, is intertwined as never before in this county and in our nation.

This reality should make the achievement of African-American males in Prince George's County a priority for all who live here. Unfortunately, the black community in Prince George's County historically has received less than its fair share of economic resources and political power. The vestiges of this neglect are seen in the juxtaposition of a county which is experiencing enormous economic expansion and black male Prince Georgians who are subject to inordinately high rates of unemployment, school failure, homicide, and imprisonment. The ability of most African-Americans to survive and prosper in what historically has been an often hostile environment attests to unique strengths that should be drawn upon to assist those who are less able.

In this committee's search for reasons why black males, on average, experience less success than others, we drew upon these strengths by seeking guidance from a variety of groups and resources. This guidance, together with our many meetings and discussions, formed the basis for the observations presented in the remainder of this section. The findings and recommendations presented in Part I speak to specific areas such as school funding, ability grouping, and special education. The information which motivated each recommendation is discussed more fully in Part II of this report.

MAJOR SCHOOL SYSTEM FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

SCHOOL FUNDING

FINDING #1:

The growing constraints on educational resources imposed by the Tax Reform Initiative by Marylanders (TRIM) adopted in 1978 have gradually eroded our school system's ability to provide the best possible education for our youth. Of the ten largest school districts in Maryland, PGCPS ranks :

- *Second lowest in per pupil costs for new and replacement textbooks;*
- *Second lowest in per pupil expenditures for library books; and*
- *Lowest in monies spent per pupil on instructional materials and supplies.*

Since TRIM was enacted, the per pupil expenditure gap between Montgomery and Prince George's County has widened from $400 in 1979, to $1238 in 1989. In 1979, Howard County's per pupil expenditure was $152 lower than the amount spent by Prince George's; ten years later, Howard County spends $430 more per pupil than our county.

While money alone does not guarantee educational excellence, PGCPS' teachers and students deserve to be given the resources required to maximize their potential. The capabilities of our teachers *and students are limited by a lack of essential resources such as textbooks, up-to-date maps and globes, and items as basic as paper.*

Given appropriate resources, our students and teachers have demonstrated that they can compete with their peers across the nation. For example, initial analyses of the Milliken II school program indicate that African-American students in these schools outperform their counterparts in comprehensive schools on criterion-referenced tests of reading and mathematics achievement (see, Grady, 1989). Milliken II Schools feature the Comer Parent Involvement Process, full-time guidance counselors, extended-day programs, full-day kindergartens, a 20:1 ratio of students to instructional staff, computer laboratories and other resources not available widely in comprehensive (non-Milliken and non-Magnet) schools. In the Superintendent's requested budget for the 1990-91 school year, PGCPS would spend $713 dollars more per pupil for students in Milliken II schools than for students attending comprehensive schools. The Black Male Achievement Committee believes that the Milliken II "enhancements" represent essential tools that should be available to teachers and students in all schools.

RECOMMENDATION #1:

PROVIDE ALL SCHOOLS WITH THE RESOURCES PROVIDED FOR MILLIKEN II SCHOOLS AND INCREASE DRAMATICALLY THE AMOUNT OF MONIES AVAILABLE FOR PURCHASING NEW TEXTBOOKS AND LIBRARY MATERIALS.

Discussion

The Prince George's County Public Schools' (PGCPS) Magnet and Milliken school programs were implemented in 1985 as part of an aggressive effort to desegregate our schools. During the 1989-90 school year, approximately 18,385 students were enrolled in 15 magnet programs offered in 47 schools.

While, 65 percent of the students participating in the magnet programs are African-Americans, magnet schools serve only 15 percent of the school system's African-American students.

Milliken II schools were an alternative feature of the school system's desegregation plan. Racially isolated schools with a percentage of black students that exceeded the court's desegregation guidelines were given additional staff along with enriched instructional resources. Currently, PGCPS operates 19 Milliken II schools. As mentioned previously, these schools receive additional resources such as the Comer Parent Involvement Process, full-time guidance counselors, extended-day programs, full-day kindergartens, a 20:1 ratio of students to instructional staff, computer laboratories and other resources.

The Magnet and Milliken II school programs have both attained some measure of success. Firm conclusions about the success of both programs must await the results of longer-range studies of students' progress. At this point, however, the Magnet school program, as intended, has decreased racial segregation between schools. Moreover, standardized and criterion-referenced test data indicate that students in many Magnet and Milliken II schools outperform their counterparts in comprehensive schools.

The achievement levels of students in Milliken II schools are especially significant as the overwhelming majority of students in these schools are African-Americans, with many coming from low-income communities. The Milliken II schools have shown that poverty is not an impenetrable barrier to academic achievement given adequately funded schools, appropriate programs, committed staff, and concerned parents.

On the negative side, the launching of the Magnet and Milliken II school programs has created a successful and adequately funded school system within one that lacks essential resources and is less effective. This predicament has fostered divisive battles for resources between that segment of the community served by the Magnet and Milliken II schools and the majority of parents whose children attend comprehensive (regular) schools.

These disputes reflect a growing perception that the quality of the education one's child receives varies dramatically between the comprehensive schools, on one hand, and the Magnet and Milliken II schools on the other. This view is damaging to the morale of students, teachers and parents, and is reinforced by funding discrepancies between schools based on program type.

If allowed to continue, the battles over school funding will lead to a community polarized by race, social class, geographic location and by the type of school program one's child attends. One need only attend a few school board meetings to acquire a glimpse of a future characterized by clashes between different segments of the community competing for limited school resources. Instead of treating education as a zero-sum game in which strengthening one area requires weakening another, County residents must work to guarantee that all schools receive sufficient support.

The argument isn't about whether the County should spend more on our youth and young adults, we already are spending more in the form of new prisons, more police officers, and more drug treatment programs. At issue is whether Prince Georgians agree with the County's current spending priorities. In 1981, the Board of Education received 48 percent of the County's revenues while the share of local monies devoted to public safety and criminal justice represented 17 percent of all County Revenues. By 1990, the Board of Education's share of County revenues had declined to 43 percent, while public safety's and criminal justice's share had increased to 21 percent. The question before us is whether the citizens of Prince George's County want this trend to continue when it appears to encourage the development of youth without the skills needed to become productive members of society.

The resources devoted to Milliken II schools represent the minimum level and type needed to provide a quality education and thus should be available in all schools. **The Black Male Achievement Committee estimates that the school system would require 100 million dollars over and above the Superintendent's current proposed budget of 560 million dollars to "Millikenize" all schools.** The County Executive, the County Council, the Board of Education and the broader community must work to find the revenues needed to fund all schools adequately. Again, while money is not the solution to all of our educational problems, adequate support for schools is an essential condition for teacher and student success.

SCHOOL CURRICULA

FINDING #2:

The need to infuse the current school curriculum with multicultural content and instructional materials was underscored throughout the testimony given by students, parents and community representatives in the various hearings held by the BMAC. These concerns were reinforced by our visits to school libraries and classrooms where we found a dearth of materials dealing with the experiences and perspectives of African-American, in a school system where 65 percent of the students are black. The textbooks, library books, magazines and required reading lists we examined contained little in the way of offerings dealing with the achievement and experience of African-Americans. Women and non-European cultural groups also received scant attention.

A Eurocentric curriculum amplifies the misperception that academic skills and knowledge are the products and possession of white people. The phenomenon of black students equating academic success with "acting white" (cf. Ogbu and Fordham, 1984), is rooted in a monochromatic school curriculum which does little to nourish the self-esteem and self-knowledge of non-white students. The presence of multicultural curricula and instructional materials would enhance inter-group understanding, increase the self-esteem and awareness of African-American students and heighten the relevance of the curriculum to the lives of African-American youth.

What we have in mind is the broadening of the curriculum, as opposed to its diminution. Steps should be taken to include information about, and produced by, African-Americans, women and

other underrepresented cultural groups at relevant points in the curriculum.

RECOMMENDATION #2.:

REPLACE WHAT IS NOW A EUROCENTRIC CURRICULUM WITH ONE THAT IS MULTICULTURAL AND DEVELOP A PLAN THAT WILL OFFER SPECIFIC STRATEGIES AND TIMELINES FOR IMPLEMENTING THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION TASK FORCE.

Discussion

The student population of PGCPS matches the growing cultural diversity of the County (see Chapter I for a demographic description of the county). A student enrollment that was predominantly white, as recently as 1977, is now more than 65 percent African-American. In addition, the number of Hispanic, Asian and African students, though relatively small, has increased 40 percent since 1984.

A chord struck consistently throughout our public hearings with parents, students, community leaders and school staff was the need for a multicultural curriculum accompanied by a staff development program which would strengthen teachers' ability to work effectively with students from diverse cultural backgrounds. African-American students and parents maintained repeatedly that existing curricula excludes the experiences and perspectives of half the county's population and two-thirds of the school system's students. This exclusion presents a damaging message to the black community because it suggests that African-Americans have contributed little of significance to the development of this nation and the world. By concentrating heavily on the contributions of Europeans and Americans of European descent, the school curricula amplifies the misperception that academic skills and knowledge are the products and possession primarily of Europeans and European Americans. Given this rubric, it is not difficult to understand why many black students equate academic success with "acting white" (cf. Ogbu and Fordham, 1984). This belief is rooted in a monochromatic school curriculum which depletes the self-esteem, self-knowledge and sense of efficacy of non-white students, while fueling cultural conflicts and misunderstandings.

African-American students are not the only group suffering from a culturally myopic school curricula. The contributions and experiences of other non-European groups and women, in general, are given the same superficial treatment as the perspectives of Africans and African-Americans. Moreover our Eurocentric school curricula are beginning to undermine our nation's ability to compete internationally because our students leave school knowing little about the world beyond the United States and Great Britain. Students prepared for the 21st century must be able to speak more than one language and be acquainted with the social and economic systems emerging in Africa, Asia, and Eastern and Western Europe.

Understanding and appreciating one's own culture is the first step toward being conversant with diverse groups and experiences. In 1988, PGCPS Multicultural Education Task Force took the following position:

> "Education that is multicultural promotes the recognition, understanding, interdependence and acceptance of individual uniqueness and cultural diversity within a pluralistic society. The term multicultural as used here refers broadly to the many cultural groups within our nation and our world: racial, ethnic, regional, religious, and socioeconomic groups, as well as men and women, the young and the old, and disabled persons."

The Black Male Achievement Committee supports the goals established by the Multicultural Task Force. The Task Force did not, however, set specific timelines or objectives necessary to fulfill its broad goal. The BMAC believes that within the next three years, the school system should complete the process of infusing the curriculum with the perspectives of groups whose contributions and perspectives are underrepresented in the curriculum. In addition, we believe that strategies which foster multicultural education should be a major focus of staff development efforts throughout the next two school years to prevent the spread of ethnic tensions that occurred in a number of schools this past year. Each school should be required to take stock of its cultural climate and develop, as part of its School Improvement Plan, strategies to improve relations among students, staff and parents.

The Black Male Achievement Committee set three years as a reasonable period for completing the first phase of the curriculum infusion process because we recognize the magnitude of this undertaking. School staff assisted by outside consultants must examine curriculum and course objectives across grade levels to make revisions, if necessary, and identify points where the perspectives of African-Americans and women are relevant yet lacking. Following the completion of this task, staff must identify textbooks and other instructional materials that can be used to impart the essential knowledge and/or skills. This means that existing textbooks and library materials must be reviewed and, where warranted, new texts and materials acquired. The Council of the Great City Schools recently established a Commission to begin the process of getting textbook publishers to improve their offerings from a multicultural perspective (see Griffin & Schuerman, 1989). While exemplary, this effort is in its initial stages and demonstrates the variety of fronts involved in making multicultural education a reality in the schoolhouse.

Simply put, the knowledge and materials required for a multicultural curriculum transfusion lie primarily outside of the school. State and local education agencies that have made multicultural education a priority are competing for the services of a small group of well known experts (e.g., Dr. Asa Hilliard at Georgia State University and Dr. James Banks at the University of Washington) and resources. Rather than continue this competition for leading experts, a process which magnifies costs and delays everyone's progress, school systems should pool their expertise and resources by forming consortia to develop curricula and instructional materials. Multicultural education is a major initiative in Prince George's County, Howard County, Montgomery County and Baltimore City; these jurisdictions should not continue to work separately to achieve similar goals.

Continued progress in the development of multicultural approaches to teaching and learning also depends heavily on the ability of our nation's teacher training institutions to provide practitioners with relevant skills. Unfortunately, the emphasis placed on multicultural education by state and local education agencies is not being matched by the development of multicultural education specializations in our universities and colleges. The absence of strong multicultural education programs at the postsecondary level forces K-12 public school systems to devote scarce resources to retraining staff already certified to teach. We firmly believe that, in the future, no educator should be certified to teach without having some background in multicultural education curriculum design and teaching strategies. If we are to meet our local and national goals, multicultural education curriculum reform must occur at the K-12 and postsecondary levels concurrently.

LACK OF AFRICAN-AMERICAN ROLE MODELS

FINDING #3

African-American students in PGCPS -- especially males -- have far more opportunities to see "themselves" as custodians, groundskeepers, bus drivers and cafeteria workers, than they do as teachers, principals and central office administrators. Blacks males represent 6 percent (313) of the total number of classroom teachers (over 5600) and 3 percent of all teacher aides. In comparison, African-Americans, as a group comprise 34 percent of all support staff (secretaries, custodians, cafeteria workers, bus drivers).

African-Americans are underrepresented in every occupational category in the school system when compared to their proportion of the County's overall population (50 percent). African-Americans, as a group (males and females), account for 30 percent of the school system's classroom teachers, 30 percent of all principals and 32 percent of all central office administrators (Deputy Superintendent,

Associate Superintendents, Assistant Superintendents, Directors, and Special Assistants). This underrepresentation is most grave in positions guiding the development of school policy and curricula, and those governing the school system's financial administration. In fact, none of the offices listed under the Deputy Superintendent in the school system's organization chart (i.e.., Budget, Grants Administration, Finance, Data Management Systems and Internal Auditing) have a professional staff member who is black. The overwhelming majority of these positions are held by white males. This arrangement personifies a paternalism that has no place in this County's present or future. If African-Americans and women can teach students and manage schools, they certainly have the expertise needed to administer school finances and information.

RECOMMENDATION #3

BY SEPTEMBER 30, 1990, THE SUPERINTENDENT SHOULD DEVELOP A PLAN THAT WILL IDENTIFY THE STRATEGIES AND TIMELINES THAT WILL BE USED TO OBTAIN AFRICAN-AMERICAN TEACHERS, COUNSELORS AND ADMINISTRATORS IN NUMBERS COMMENSURATE WITH THEIR PERCENTAGE OF THE COUNTY'S POPULATION. SPECIFIC EMPHASIS SHOULD BE PLACED ON INCREASING THE NUMBER OF BLACK MALE AND FEMALE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TEACHERS, GUIDANCE COUNSELORS AND SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGISTS. IN ADDITION, THE PLAN SHOULD ADDRESS THE NEED TO INCREASE THE NUMBER OF AFRICAN-AMERICANS AND WOMEN EMPLOYED IN THE OFFICES LISTED UNDER THE DEPUTY SUPERINTENDENT.

Discussion

During the years when children begin to form their life's dreams, our school curricula and staffing patterns offer a restricted range of options (and thus aspirations) to African-Americans. In a County that is 50 percent black and a school system that is 65 percent black, few African-Americans are involved in the curriculum development process and in the management of the school system's fiscal operation.

The school system should significantly strengthen its efforts to recruit, hire, and retain qualified African-American staff at all levels, with a particular emphasis on elementary school teachers (especially African-American males), guidance counselors, school psychologists, and central office supervisors and administrators; i.e., those who are directly responsible for learning and those who develop the policies guiding the teaching and learning process. To achieve this goal, the school system must depart from its traditional practice of hiring and promoting almost exclusively from within (the exception being entry level positions -- i.e., teachers, secretaries, etc.). This policy institutionalizes, for years to come, the 30 percent ceiling which currently exists for African-American staff across occupational levels and types. While the committee appreciates the importance of providing incentives and career opportunities for current staff, the School Board is charged with ensuring that our system possesses the most talented individuals available. We must not restrict ourselves to existing personnel in our search for the best possible staff.

Our school system currently needs more African-American male and female teachers and administrators to broaden the range of role models available for black and white students and to increase the diversity of perspectives used to shape school system policies and priorities. School districts across the nation have similar needs and are competing for the scarce supply of black educators. Prince George's County Public Schools enters this national competition armed with a $10,000 budget for recruiting new teachers, supplemented by $9,000 in additional funds and services furnished by the Business and Industry Council. In comparison, the Prince George's County Police Department received $250,000 to recruit new police officers. We do not think that the citizens of Prince George's County believe that acquiring new and highly qualified police officers is twenty times more important than attracting the best new teachers; yet, this is what the facts imply. The uneven expenditure of recruitment funds by the school system and police department also suggests that the County's leadership believes that the disproportionate involvement of black males in the criminal justice system is a permanent trend that the County must face in the future. Unfortunately, this belief will be fulfilled if school programs continue to be underfunded. Obviously, the school system needs a substantial increase in the amount of funds and the number of staff devoted to recruiting new personnel.

Strengthening recruitment efforts alone, however, will not resolve the shortage of African-American teachers, and educators in general. There simply aren't enough blacks being trained in schools of education to meet current demands. The pool of eligible African-Americans has been reduced by declines in the percentage of blacks who enroll in and complete college, and who obtain advanced degrees (see, QEM, 1990; NRC, 1989; Carter and Wilson, 1989). Furthermore, between 1976 and 1988, African-Americans attending college left the fields of social science and education in unprecedented numbers. According to Carter and Wilson (1989):

> "African-Americans' representation in baccalaureate and master's education and social science fields fell drastically between 1976 and 1987. The number of bachelor's degrees in education and the social sciences plummeted by 10,000 and more than 5000 respectively. At the master's level, the corresponding numbers dropped by 7000 and 400."

More needs to be done at earlier points in the educational pipeline to encourage African-American youth to pursue careers in education. In the immediate term, the pool of black educators could be increased by encouraging retired teachers and administrators to return on a part-time basis. This would require adjusting state and local provisions in ways that would allow formerly retired personnel to return without jeopardizing their retirement benefits. Offering alternative training and certification programs for individuals interested in teaching but who were not education majors in college is another strategy states and localities have used to increase the pool of people going into teaching. Prince George's County and the Greater Washington Metropolitan area possess a wealth of untapped talent in this regard. What we lack is a state initiative enabling school systems to pursue this option. The Maryland State Department of Education should take immediate steps to explore the feasibility of such a program.

Finally, we applaud the school system for the steps it has already taken to address the general shortage of teachers through the creation of a local chapter of the Future Teachers of Maryland Club in the County's high schools. This program identifies young people interested in teaching and provides them with the experiences and guidance needed to pursue careers in education at the postsecondary level. During the past year, 350 students were enrolled in this program.

Here, as in the area of multicultural education, colleges, SEAs and LEAs must work cooperatively to address local and national needs to increase the supply of educators – especially those who are African-American.

ABILITY GROUPING AND LEVELING

FINDING #4

School system data on the participation of African-American males in various levels of the science, mathematics, social studies and English curricula in middle and high school show that black males are concentrated in lower level courses and seriously under-represented in more advanced levels of the curriculum (these data are discussed in Chapter II in greater detail). For example, black males comprise 31 percent of the student enrollment in grade 12, but make up only 12 percent of the students taking Calculus in grade 12. In comparison, black males comprise 48 percent of the students taking Algebra 1 in grade 12, a course that students who plan to attend college should complete no later than 10th grade.

This pattern is repeated when one examines the enrollment of black males in basic and more advanced levels of the English, social studies and science curricula. These discrepancies mean that a sizable number of black males are receiving an education that leaves them ill-equipped to enter and complete college at a time when a majority of new jobs require some form of postsecondary education

(Johnston & Packer, 1987). In short, a disproportionately large number of black males are leaving school with an industrial age education in the midst of a information and service dominated economy. This formula will produce a large pool of black men who will lack the skills needed to acquire anything other than the most low-paying jobs, if any job at all; men who will be unable to form or support families and who will be dependent upon the larger society for housing, health care and other essential services.

RECOMMENDATION #4.

CREATE A STRONG CORE ACADEMIC CURRICULUM IN MATHEMATICS, SCIENCE AND COMMUNICATION SKILLS (ORAL LANGUAGE, READING, WRITING AND LITERATURE), AND ENSURE THAT A MAJORITY OF STUDENTS HAVE ACCESS TO, AND EXPERIENCE SUCCESS IN, ADVANCED LEVELS OF THE CURRICULUM.

Discussion

Multicultural education has two different connotations -- the most prevalent being that students should have opportunities to learn about their own and other cultural groups throughout the curriculum. This view of multicultural education was addressed in our second recommendation. The BMAC also contends that multicultural education means that public schools must succeed in educating students from diverse cultural groups. While the school system has made significant strides in reducing the performance gap between white and black students on the California Achievement Test, other evidence suggests that African-American males, more than any other group, are receiving an education that is qualitatively different from that provided to most white students. If intelligence or ability is normally distributed across racial, gender and ethnic groups, each of the 4 major groups in the school population (black males, black females, white males and white females) should be represented proportionately in lower and higher level courses.

This occurs for white males and females, but not black males -- the largest single group in the school system. Black females, in comparison, tend to be only slightly underrepresented across various levels of the middle and high school curriculum.

Educational success for students involves more than increasing norm-referenced achievement test scores. Our schools should be held accountable for making sure that the majority of our students leave school prepared to pursue the educational and career options available now and in the future. Employment opportunities in Prince George's County and the Greater Washington Metropolitan area increasingly require advanced oral and written communication skills at entry levels. Our community has also witnessed an enormous growth in the number of computer and high tech firms which require employees with engineering, computer science and mathematics backgrounds. In short, our community is heavily and increasingly invested in service and communication industries. A large proportion of African-American males, however, leave school having had a qualitatively different and inferior education that denies them access to the local labor market.

In the BMAC's review of school system data, we found little in the way of criterion or norm-referenced test scores which would support the overenrollment of black males in lower level courses. Instead, this trend appears to be the vestige of inappropriate uses of ability grouping and leveling which have resulted in the placement of African-Americans in less challenging curricular programs locally, as well as nationally (see Oakes, 1985; Cole & Griffin, 1988). For example, the performance of black males and females on criterion referenced mathematics and reading tests in our schools is comparable to that of white students through the third grade. Beginning in fourth grade, however, black males experience a sharp decline in their mathematics and reading CRT scores. A study of the percentage of African-American males in top and bottom reading groups in 18 elementary schools produced similar findings. The percentage of black males in the top reading group dropped significantly between grades 4 and 6 (from 23 percent in grades 1 and 4, to 12 percent in grade 6). These shifts in the placement and performance of black males coincide with the widespread appearance of ability grouping as an instructional strategy and illustrate the debilitating effects this approach has on student performance when used inappropriately. In addition, the contrast between the performance of black males in the primary (K - 3) versus intermediate (4 - 6) grades may also be associated with the transition from cooperative to competitive modes of social interaction that occurs as children enter the intermediate grades (Kunjufu, 1985).

The Black Male Achievement Committee recommends that the school system enact a program, within the next two years, that will increase the participation of black males and females in advanced groups and upper level courses in numbers consistent with their CRT performance and their percentage of the total school or grade level enrollment. As part of this effort the school system should re-examine its grouping and leveling practices and work to:

- eliminate course level and ability group placement criteria that restrict access to students who have the potential to succeed given proper exposure and support;
- reduce the excessive amount of leveling now practiced in the middle and high school English and social studies curriculum;
- strengthen the core academic curriculum (courses all students are required to take) to ensure that Algebra and Biology and advanced oral and written communication skills (as defined by the National Assessment of Educational Progress) become minimal competencies for college and non-college bound students alike;
- provide teachers with the training and resources needed to present the "college preparatory" curriculum to the vast majority of students.

These recommendations do not call for the elimination of ability grouping or the lowering of standards. We believe, instead, that the school system should discard course leveling and ability grouping practices/policies which do not promote student progress and growth. Based on the evidence we've seen, the practices now in place encourage underachievement and provide too many students with an education that has little meaning in today's world. With regard to ability grouping, the school system should shift the burden of proof from children and their parents to teachers, counselors and school psychologists. That is, educators should have to present a persuasive case, buttressed by a variety of data, to justify denying students access to advanced level courses and groups. Currently, the burden of proof rests unfairly on the shoulders of parents who do not possess the information needed to support their beliefs.

OVERREPRESENTATION OF BLACK MALES IN SPECIAL EDUCATION

FINDING #5

Black males comprise 33 percent of the total student population, but constitute nearly half (47 percent) of the students receiving special education services. The vast majority of blacks, as well as whites, receive services for individuals with speech and language impairments, and with specific disabilities. The definitions of these categories are ambiguous enough to foster their potential abuse, particularly in cases where cultural and language/dialect differences exist between students and teachers.

The members of the BMAC were dismayed by the lack of attention given this matter by the leadership of the special education program. There appears to be very little analysis of the referral and assessment process as it relates to the disproportionately large enrollment of black males. The committee saw little evidence of the effectiveness of the practices used to address the needs of students with speech and language impairments and specific disabilities. Staff development designed to heighten the awareness and sensitivity of special education and mainstream teachers to the troubling enrollment disparities does not seem to have been considered. In addition, little thought appears to have been given to the possible impact of the sizable mismatch between the race and

gender of the majority of the special education staff, as compared to the race and gender of the majority of the students referred to and enrolled in special education classes.

The school system should examine the instruments, procedures and practices used by teachers (regular and special education) and school psychologists to refer and place students in special education programs. Here again, the paucity of African-American school psychologists as well as psychologists from other ethnic groups (e.g., Asian and Hispanic) only serves to create concerns about the sensitivity of existing staff and the integrity of the process.

RECOMMENDATION #5

A TASK FORCE SHOULD BE CREATED IMMEDIATELY TO EXAMINE THE REFERRAL, ASSESSMENT AND REMEDIATION STRATEGIES USED IN THE SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAM IN RELATION TO THEIR IMPACT ON THE DISPROPORTIONATE ENROLLMENT OF AFRICAN-AMERICAN MALES IN SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS. THIS TASK FORCE SHOULD DEVELOP A PLAN OUTLINING STEPS THAT WILL BE TAKEN TO STRENGTHEN SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES AND ELIMINATE INAPPROPRIATE PLACEMENTS.

Discussion

There is considerable overlap between the issues raised in our discussion of ability grouping, and the subject of special education. The enrollment trends in special education, however, were so alarming that they warranted separate attention. On the surface, African-Americans and white students are represented proportionately in the special education student population. African-American students comprise 65 percent of the total student enrollment and make up approximately 67 percent of the students enrolled in special education. When one considers both race and gender, however, the picture changes dramatically. Black males comprise 33 percent of the total student population, but constitute nearly 47 percent of the students receiving special education services. White males are also overrepresented in special education, though not to the same extent as black males.

The PGCPS special education program serves students with 11 different disabilities. The vast majority of African-Americans, as well as whites, receive services for individuals with speech and language impairments and specific disabilities. Speech and language impairments are defined in material provided by the school system as:

> a communication disorder, such as stuttering, impaired articulation, a language impairment, or a voice impairment which adversely affects a child's educational performance.

Specific learning disabilities refers to:

> a disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or using language, spoken or written, which may manifest itself in an imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell or do mathematical calculations.

Both definitions are broad enough to foster their potential abuse, particularly in cases where there are differences in the English dialect and knowledge base used by the students and the school. It is difficult to fathom why black males outnumber black females almost two to one in their enrollment in speech/language impairment classes and classes for those with specific learning disabilities. White males also outnumber white females in these categories at roughly the same ratio.

We suspect that the overenrollment of black and white males in special education classes may be traced, in part, to the problems males encounter adapting to a school culture which is prescribed by a predominantly white and female teaching force. To guard against this possibility, the school system should establish a task force to examine the special education referral process (especially, the instruments and procedures involved), staff composition and training, and the overall organization of the department. This task force should complete its work within one year. Inappropriate placements in special education create barriers to development and achievement that potentially are irreversible; hence, the operation of this program merits attention so long as current patterns persist.

EXTENDED SUPPORT FOR FAMILIES

FINDING #6

The social context in which schools function has changed significantly since 1960. In 1988, only 17 percent of American families had the "traditional" structure of a father, mother and children living together (Ianni, 1988). Social scientists anticipate that the 1990 census results will reveal that one-third of American families will have one wage-earner, while the remainder will be equally split between households with two working spouses and those headed by a single parent who works. Affluent or poor, our nation's children receive less guidance and support from parents than was once true; and we're losing many of our youths earlier than ever before to drug-use, drug-related criminal activities, premature sexual involvement and pregnancy.

Despite this new reality, the length of the school day has remained virtually unchanged. We dismiss our children at 3 p.m. to return to homes that often lack adult supervision Rather than decry the loss of the "traditional" American family, our schools and communities should respond to the needs created by the new American family.

RECOMMENDATION #6.

THE SCHOOL SYSTEM SHOULD OFFER INCREASED SUPPORT TO FAMILIES, ESPECIALLY THOSE LIVING IN ECONOMICALLY DISADVANTAGED COMMUNITIES BY:

- *EXPANDING THE NUMBER OF FULL-DAY KINDERGARTEN AND EXTENDED-DAY PROGRAMS;*
- *RESTORING EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES IN MIDDLE SCHOOL; AND*
- *WORKING WITH OTHER COUNTY AGENCIES TO EXTEND THE MULTI-SERVICE APPROACH (COORDINATED EDUCATIONAL, HEALTH, HOUSING, EMPLOYMENT SERVICES) MODEL TO SCHOOLS SERVING DISADVANTAGED COMMUNITIES.*

THE MULTISERVICE APPROACH IS A MAJOR ELEMENT OF FORESTVILLE HIGH SCHOOL'S RESTRUCTURING PROPOSAL. THIS PROPOSAL WAS DEVELOPED IN COLLABORATION WITH THE COMMUNITY AND IDENTIFIES CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS AND OTHER RESOURCES NEEDED TO ACHIEVE STATED GOALS. THIS PROJECT BEARS WATCHING AS A MODEL WHICH MAY BE ADOPTED COUNTY-WIDE OR BY SCHOOLS SERVING COMMUNITIES WITH SIMILAR NEEDS.

NEW CHALLENGES FOR PUPIL SERVICES

FINDING #7.

New federal education programs such as Even Start -- a family literacy project -- recognize that the development of children is bound inextricably to the status of their families. Just as children of teenage parents, are likely themselves to become parents as teenagers, children of parents with poor reading and writing skills are likely to develop

similar problems.. To maximize the learning potential of children, we must ensure that their families have the resources needed to provide a nurturing environment. The gripping Washington Post series on "Dooney," an elementary school student whose mother was addicted to crack, demonstrated the fallacy of believing that our young can be educated without regard to the needs of their families.

Schools do not possess the resources needed to assist troubled families. Schools, however, can serve as a nexus between families and agencies/organizations designed to support its members. The Teen Parenting and Daycare Program at Northwestern High School is an excellent example of this approach. Daycare and parenting education furnished at the school allows mothers and, in some cases, fathers, to continue their education and promote the development of their infants. The Casey Project, an effort of the Prince George's County Commission for Families, represents another attempt to provide services to families by using schools and families as a focal point for services rather than individuals and agencies. The case for expansion of this model is argued persuasively in a recent report issued by the Institute for Educational Leadership (Hodgkinson, 1989).

Despite its promise, this approach remains an exception rather than the rule. The current status and organization of the Division of Pupil Services is a good example of the traditional method of having separate groups of professionals who work in isolation and focus on individuals rather than families and communities. The Division has separate departments or offices for human relations personnel, guidance counselors, school psychologists, pupil personnel workers (staff responsible for working with the home and the school), health service professionals and drug education staff. The boundaries between the departments and offices are based upon the characteristics and specializations of division staff, rather than the needs of students, schools and communities. Some of the division's functions (e.g., pupil personnel workers) should be school-based rather than situated in the central office. Other roles, such as those *performed by guidance counselors require stronger ties to the classroom and community than the current structure permits. The belief that guidance counselors and other Pupil Services Staff can work effectively with individual students in isolation of teachers, students' peers, and most importantly, students' families, is being replaced by an understanding that staff time is better spent collaborating with teachers, students, and families to solve problems and address needs. The existing organization and staff characteristics of the Pupil Services Division cannot help but impede service coordination and the development of a family and classroom focus. The departments in this Division should be reorganized around a set of complementary roles and responsibilities, as opposed to fields of expertise. In addition, concerted efforts should be made to increase the ethnic diversity of school psychologists, a group which is now predominantly white, and the number of staff in the Human Relations Office.*

RECOMMENDATION #7.

WITHIN THE NEXT THREE MONTHS, THE SCHOOL SYSTEM SHOULD DEVELOP A PLAN TO REORGANIZE THE DIVISION OF PUPIL SERVICES AND INCREASE THE ETHNIC DIVERSITY OF STAFF IN KEY OFFICES TO FOSTER GREATER COLLABORATION BETWEEN COUNSELORS, SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGISTS AND PUPIL/PERSONNEL WORKERS, AND TO CREATE CLOSER TIES BETWEEN THESE PERSONNEL AND THE SCHOOLS, STUDENTS AND COMMUNITIES THEY SERVE.

NEED FOR AN EXPANDED ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEM

FINDING #8

This committee was asked to place the school system under a microscope. For the most part, school staff made every effort to satisfy our requests for information. Each committee member has a notebook filled with hundreds of pages of charts, tables, and graphs depicting various aspects of the school system.

To our surprise, much of the information presented to the committee (e.g., tracking and ability grouping data, student enrollment breakdowns by race/ethnicity and gender) had never been collected before and may not be available, on a systematic basis, in the future. While we commend staff for their diligence and recognize that school systems are not research institutions, the data currently being used to assess school effectiveness and student progress employs a range of outcomes that are too narrow and leaves the processes underlying the outcomes open to speculation. In short, the existing accountability system helps the school system identify problems but not solutions. Our schools must be able to select remedies related to specific weaknesses rather than interventions drawn from some national school reform menu of the day.

RECOMMENDATION #8.

THE SCHOOL SYSTEM SHOULD ADOPT AN ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEM WHICH ENCOMPASSES A BROADER ARRAY OF INDICES OF STUDENT PROGRESS AND PERFORMANCE. AT MINIMUM, THESE MEASURES SHOULD INCLUDE STUDENT PERFORMANCE ON CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS, STUDENT PARTICIPATION IN VARIOUS CURRICULAR PROGRAMS (MAGNET, TAG,COMPENSATORY, SPECIAL EDUCATION, VOCATIONAL, ETC.) AND LEVELS (E.G., *ADVANCED AND LOWER LEVEL SCIENCE, MATHEMATICS, SOCIAL STUDIES AND ENGLISH COURSES), SAT PERFORMANCE ALONG WITH THE PERCENTAGE AND CHARACTERISTICS OF STUDENTS TAKING THE SAT, DROP-OUT STATISTICS, SUSPENSION AND ENROLLMENT DATA, AND OVERALL STUDENT ENROLLMENT TRENDS. ALL OF THESE DATA SHOULD BE REPORTED BY RACE/ETHNICITY AND GENDER, AND BY SCHOOL. THIS KIND OF ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEM WILL REQUIRE THE DEVELOPMENT OF A NEW INFORMATION MANAGEMENT SYSTEM THAT CAN READILY PROVIDE SCHOOLS, PARENTS AND STAFF WITH THE INFORMATION NEEDED TO ASSESS PROGRAM EFFECTIVENESS AND TO DESIGN NECESSARY IMPROVEMENTS.*

STRONGER TIES BETWEEN WORK AND SCHOOL

FINDING # 9.

The work/business world is changing so rapidly that the occupational opportunities available today may no longer exist by the time today's middle school students graduate from high school or college. Despite the range of options available in today's labor market, advanced oral and written communication skills, critical thinking skills, creativity, computational skills, self-discipline and computer competence seem to form a network of job prerequisites for most occupations. Reading, writing, thinking, mathematics and computing are not isolated skills, but abilities adults must use in unison. The integrated use of skills and knowledge in work/business and community life must be paralleled by an interdisciplinary approach to instruction (e.g., integrating or coordinating English and social studies instruction) in schools.

Moreover, the connections between the work/business world and school must be made for all students, not just those in vocational *education. We've chosen to emphasize both business and work in this discussion because too many of our young people, especially African-Americans, see employment by others, as opposed to self-employment, as their only career option.*

The academic curriculum must do more than teach our young how to work for someone else. This nation needs people to build businesses that will drive the future economy. To accomplish this task, our youth must have meaningful forms of exposure to the requirements of work and the business/managerial world. Our society needs entrepreneurs, as well as skilled workers.

RECOMMENDATION #9.

THE SCHOOL SYSTEM SHOULD STRENGTHEN ITS EFFORTS TO PROVIDE STUDENTS WITH MENTORS AND EXPERIENCES THAT FORGE GREATER TIES BETWEEN ACADEMICS AND THE WORK WORLD BY OBTAINING STAFF TO COORDINATE AND STRENGTHEN MENTORING AND INTERNSHIP PROGRAMS .

LENGTHENING THE SCHOOL YEAR FOR TEACHERS

FINDING #10

PGCPS instructional staff are already engaged in a host of school improvement projects that place considerable demands on their time and energy. Many of our recommendations call for additional planning and staff training that would be difficult to accomplish without encroaching further on time that should be devoted to students. While the idea of extending the school year for students is meeting resistance around the country, we can achieve similar results by extending the school year for teachers with commensurate *increases in teacher salaries and benefits. Instructional time for students would be extended by reducing the number of days during the student school year that teachers are taken out of the classroom for staff development and planning.*

Creating a school system that will educate children for the 21st Century requires nothing short of extensive in-service training aimed at developing new curricula and materials, and expertise in the use of promising instructional strategies and tools. The reinvention of our public schools cannot take place on the "fly." An educational consultant recently characterized the way schools typically engage in school reform as attempting to change a tire while the car is moving. At some point, we must "pull over" to give school staff the time they need to replenish their knowledge and skills. Adding two weeks to the beginning and end of the current school year for teachers may begin to relieve some of the difficulties educators face in their efforts to balance serving students against developing new skills and strategies.

RECOMMENDATION #10.

THE LENGTH OF THE SCHOOL YEAR FOR TEACHERS SHOULD BE EXTENDED FROM 10 TO 11 MONTHS ,WITH COMMENSURATE INCREASES IN TEACHER SALARIES AND BENEFITS,TO PROVIDE MORE TIME FOR PLANNING, IN-SERVICE TRAINING, AND DIALOGUES WITH PARENTS AND COMMUNITY GROUPS.

MAJOR RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE COMMUNITY

Public education is a collaborative process; the success of teachers and students depends on the community and schools working cooperatively. Given this reality, the educational and social problems encountered by black males cannot be blamed solely on the schools or factors endemic to the larger society such as racism. Historically, African-Americans have had to overcome a host of external forces such as housing and job discrimination, and inferior schooling, along with legal and de facto barriers to social, economic and educational advancement. These forces are discussed at considerable length in Part II, Chapter V; and as this chapter shows, many of these factors still act to slow the economic, social and educational development of black Americans.

Though sometimes wearying, the battle against discrimination must continue to be fought by African-Americans and others in this society. This battle, however, must be fought on two fronts. African-Americans must continue to work to remove barriers found in the larger society, while at the same time ensuring that black children, youth and adults are poised to take maximum advantage of existing opportunities. In the latter regard, the African-American community shares some of the responsibility for the problems facing its youth and must take the lead in finding solutions both within and outside the boundaries of its homes and neighborhoods.

FINDING #1.

Prince George's County Public Schools uses an accountability system to assess school and staff effectiveness. The impact of this system is reflected in the enormous pressure teachers and school principals feel to raise test scores. While we are not endorsing test scores as a

sole criterion for measuring school effectiveness, our point here is that the use of an accountability system fosters responsibility and responsiveness. Prince Georgians have an accountability system of their own -- the ballot box. The persistent problems facing African-American males and our schools, in general, are evidence that the public has not held its leaders responsible for producing the results we expect. Black and white Prince Georgians repeatedly have expressed their dissatisfaction with school funding levels, yet this frustration has not been translated into action by school board members and County legislators. It is time for Prince Georgians to send our leaders a strong message which states that teachers aren't the only people accountable for the education of our children. Those who feel that education is a major priority should support candidates and legislation consistent with their beliefs. We cannot blame our leaders for doing less than we want if we do not hold these same leaders accountable for their actions. The "we" referred to here includes both black and white citizens of Prince George's County. In a school system that is 65 percent black, if African-Americans are not educated adequately, one can be assured that whites won't be either. Conversely, schools that offer a quality education for African-American students cannot help but do the same for students from other ethnic groups.

RECOMMENDATION # 1.

PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY CITIZENS WHO BELIEVE THAT OUR SCHOOL SYSTEM NEEDS EXPANDED FUNDING AND OTHER IMPROVEMENTS SHOULD MAKE THE FUTURE OF OUR SCHOOLS A MAJOR ISSUE IN THE UPCOMING ELECTION. CANDIDATES FOR LOCAL AND STATE POSITIONS SHOULD BE ASKED TO STATE THEIR PLANS (NOT SIMPLY GOALS) FOR MEETING THE SCHOOL SYSTEM'S NEEDS. MOST IMPORTANTLY, WE MUST USE OUR ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEM -- THE BALLOT BOX -- TO FOSTER RESPONSIBILITY AND RESPONSIVENESS ON THE PART OF

OUR ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES. WE MUST TURN OUT TO VOTE FOR THE PEOPLE AND ISSUES WE SUPPORT.

FINDING #2.

Multicultural education was a subject on the minds of most of the people who testified at the BMAC hearings. While much was said about the school system's failure to help African-Americans learn about themselves, little attention was given to what parents can do to further young people's appreciation of their own culture and that of other groups. The school system certainly has not done what it should to incorporate the cultural experience of African-Americans, women and other underrepresented groups into the curriculum. As stated previously, the system's efforts in this regard must be expanded and strengthened. The African-American community, however, should not assume that, given the proper tools and commitment, a teaching force that is predominantly white and female will have the expertise needed to teach black children about themselves. Self-knowledge, like other forms of knowledge, begins, and must be reinforced continually, at home. Parents must work to ensure that the schools obtain the resources and tools needed to broaden the cultural perspectives represented in the curricula and in the approaches to learning used in classrooms. We cannot, however, send our children to school as cultural blank slates and expect the schools alone to supply the necessary information. Multicultural education begins at home and should be nurtured at school.

RECOMMENDATION #2.

PARENTS AND COMMUNITY GROUPS SHOULD PROVIDE INCREASED OPPORTUNITIES FOR AFRICAN-AMERICAN YOUTH TO LEARN ABOUT THEMSELVES AT HOME AND IN THE COMMUNITY. THESE EFFORTS MAY BE STRENGTHENED BY TRACING FAMILY HISTORIES, VISITING

LOCAL AND REGIONAL SITES THAT HAVE HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE FOR AFRICAN-AMERICANS, FORMING AFRICAN-AMERICAN HISTORY STUDY GROUPS, AND BY PARENTS AND ADULTS TAKING MORE TIME TO TALK SENSITIVELY TO YOUNG PEOPLE ABOUT THE DIFFICULT AND SOMETIMES PAINFUL REALITIES OF RACE AND ETHNICITY IN THE UNITED STATES. AFRICAN-AMERICAN CHILDREN ALSO NEED TO BECOME MORE COGNIZANT OF THE AFRICAN DIASPORA -- THE FACT THAT PEOPLE OF AFRICAN DESCENT LIVE AND THRIVE IN COUNTRIES THROUGHOUT THE WORLD. THROUGH THIS KNOWLEDGE, BLACK AND WHITE CHILDREN MAY COME TO APPRECIATE THE RICHNESS AND DIVERSITY OF THE AFRICAN-AMERICAN EXPERIENCE, DEVELOP GREATER MUTUAL RESPECT, AND REALIZE A NEW SET OF POSSIBILITIES FOR OUR COMMUNITY.

FINDING #3

African-Americans have always used education as a primary path toward economic and social advancement. Blacks literally have risked their lives to become literate. This legacy makes the phenomena of young African-Americans treating academic achievement as something for whites or "nerds" (see, Ogbu & Fordham, 1987) all the more disturbing. Schools can disarm this notion by increasing the numbers of black students working successfully in advanced level courses. The community's responsibility, here, is to ensure that young people view academic excellence as a goal important for its own sake, as well as for the opportunities it affords later in life. Black and white youth need role models and experiences that reinforce the intrinsic value of learning and that help make connections between knowledge and its application in life beyond school. This society will not significantly increase the numbers of African-American engineers, scientists, and mathematicians until academic excellence and the means for its

achievement (e.g., financial aid for college), begins to approach the visibility, importance and availability of resources devoted to producing stars in sports and other entertainment fields. This priority shift must occur among adults and young people. The adult community must become aware of its own role in the devaluation of academic achievement. We must examine what we model and reward. Does the child who excels in mathematics receive as much attention and as many rewards as the stellar athlete? Do we encourage youth to excel in school because of the intrinsic value of knowledge, or because schooling provides credentials that bring social status and monetary gain? In light of the past decade, the answers to these questions are clear; our society has emphasized the extrinsic rather than intrinsic value of learning, and our attempts to reward academic excellence have been too few and too feeble.

RECOMMENDATION #3

A. THE AFRICAN-AMERICAN COMMUNITY MUST INCREASE ITS SUPPORT FOR SCHOOL ACHIEVEMENT BY ESTABLISHING NEIGHBORHOOD LEARNING CENTERS IN CHURCHES, RECREATIONAL CENTERS, HOUSING DEVELOPMENTS, SHOPPING MALLS AND OTHER EASILY ACCESSIBLE SITES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE AND THEIR FAMILIES.

B. AFRICAN-AMERICAN FRATERNAL, PROFESSIONAL AND VOLUNTEER ORGANIZATIONS SHOULD INCREASE THEIR INVOLVEMENT IN MENTORING AND COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAMS, AND IN THEIR SUPPORT FOR COMMUNITY-BASED EFFORTS (E.G., THE FAMILY MATHEMATICS PROGRAM IN PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY AND THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA) THAT SUPPORT ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE.

C. IN THE AGE OF DUAL INCOME AND SINGLE PARENT FAMILIES LIVING APART FROM OTHER EXTENDED FAMILY MEMBERS, PARENTS NEED TO FORM SUPPORT GROUPS, CLUBS OR ASSOCIATIONS DESIGNED TO NURTURE YOUTH (AS WELL AS ADULTS) AND EXPOSE THEM TO THE EXPERIENCES AND VALUES NEEDED TO LEAD SUCCESSFUL LIVES.

FINDING #4

Another sentiment that emerged from the committee's hearings was the sense that the African-American community is losing its spiritual compass, or the will to abide by the guidance it provides. While those of us who were part of the rebellious sixties generation questioned our parents' values, we now find comfort in many of the same beliefs we once belittled. The sixties brought remarkable insights and energy to a country once resigned to economic and social injustice. But in the process of catalyzing societal change, many traditions were abandoned because of their ties to a flawed past, as opposed to their salience for the future. In the interim, a generation of children has been raised detached from the values that we who are now over forty find ourselves returning to. This new generation may not have the luxury of rediscovering these values in their middle age because a foundation was never laid. What are the mores to which we refer? Love of family. Respect for wisdom and one's elders. An obligation to care for those younger and less fortunate than oneself, and a belief in something greater than oneself. To find our way forward, we must look back to the experiences which fostered the development of these values and find ways to offer similar encounters in the context of today's world.

RECOMMENDATION #4

EACH OF US MUST DEFINE, COMMUNICATE AND MODEL THOSE VALUES WE THINK ARE ESSENTIAL TO FOSTERING LOVE OF FAMILY, RESPECT FOR COMMUNITY, ADMIRATION FOR HARD WORK, REVERENCE FOR WISDOM AND THE OBLIGATION TO CARE FOR AND CHERISH OUR YOUNG. THESE VALUES CAN BE COMMUNICATED AND MODELLED IN SIMPLE WAYS SUCH AS:

- *TAKING TIME TO MEET OUR NEIGHBORS AND THEIR FAMILIES;*
- *ESTABLISHING NEIGHBORHOOD TELEPHONE TREES TO COMMUNICATE CONCERNS AND ORGANIZE ACTIVITIES;*
- *MONITORING WHAT CHILDREN AND ADULTS WATCH ON TELEVISION AND REDUCING THE AMOUNT OF TIME SPENT WATCHING TELEVISION PROGRAMS;*
- *READING TO CHILDREN AND ENCOURAGING THEM TO READ BY PROVIDING APPROPRIATE MODELS (PARENTS AND SIGNIFICANT ADULTS WHO SPEND TIME READING AND DISCUSSING WHAT THEY HAVE READ)*
- *REACHING A CONSENSUS ABOUT LOCAL STANDARDS FOR ADULT'S AND CHILDREN'S BEHAVIOR (LANGUAGE AND PHYSICAL), AND THE STRATEGIES THAT WILL BE USED TO ENCOURAGE INDIVIDUAL ASSENT; AND*

- *SUPPORTING AND BUILDING INSTITUTIONS (E.G., PLACES OF WORSHIP, YOUTH ORGANIZATIONS, AND VOLUNTEER GROUPS) THAT EXTEND THESE VALUES THROUGHOUT SOCIETY.*

The Black Male Achievement Committee will continue its work during the 1990-91 school year. The committee will monitor the school system's response to our recommendations, communicate its concerns with parents, business representatives, religious leaders and community groups, and work with elected officials to ensure that the school system receives the resources and support required to educate all of our children.

BLACK MALE ACHIEVEMENT COMMITTEE REPORT: FROM PERIL TO PROMISE

PART II

SCHOOLS, COMMUNITY AND NATION

Chapter I

Prince George's County Population, Education Level and Income Trends

The population of Prince George's County began a fundamental and rapid transformation in the late-1960s. The pace of this change accelerated throughout the decade of the 1970s and first half of the 1980s. The purpose of the following discussion is to characterize the scope of this change and compare it to population trends for the state of Maryland and the nation. Census data are provided to depict the degree to which the population of Prince George's County has changed, especially in terms of its racial composition. Data are also provided on the average adult education level, annual per capita income and median household income. State and national trend data are furnished for comparison purposes. Where available and appropriate, population comparisons are noted for the other jurisdictions in Maryland which comprise the metropolitan areas of Baltimore and Washington, D.C.

A. Population Trends

Data in Figure 1 show the 30-year population trends for the six metropolitan jurisdictions of Maryland[1] . These data are based on census summaries and projections completed by the Maryland Department of State Planning (MDSP)[2]. In the period between 1970 and 1990, the overall population of Prince George's County grew by 7.6 percent. Census projections show that in the final decade of this century, the population of Prince George's will increase at nearly the same rate, to about 765,000 residents.

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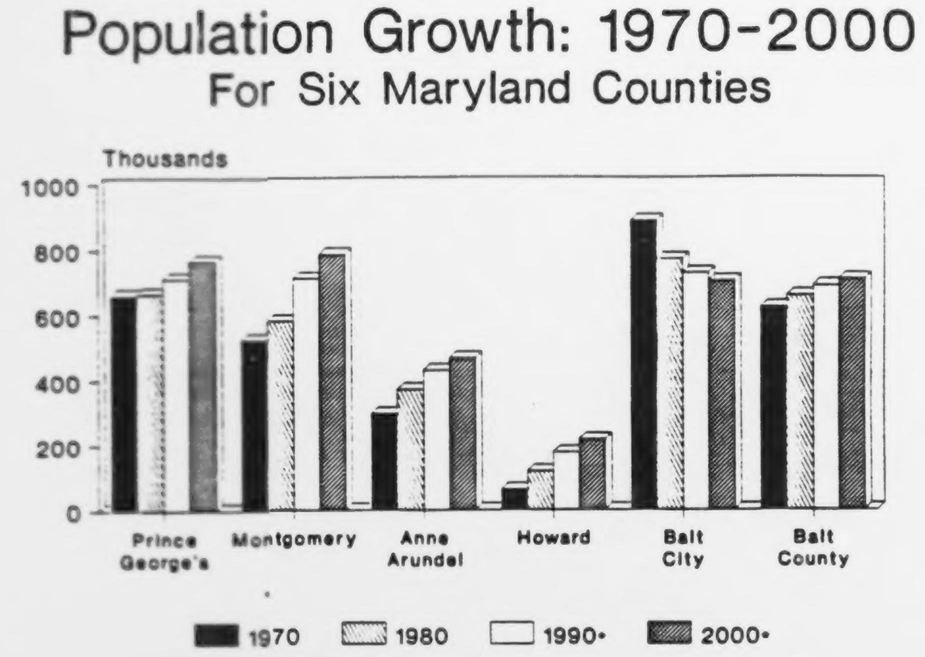
[1] Throughout this report comparisons are drawn between Prince George's County Public Schools and other school systems in Maryland which are generally comparable, i.e. similar size and/or enrollment characteristics. The purpose of this was to avoid mingling significantly different types of school district experiences in these comparisons.

[2] These same data were presented in the report, **Regional Education Needs Assessment Report,** prepared by the Office of Policy and Planning, University of Maryland System.

Figure 1


Population Growth: 1970-2000
For Six Maryland Counties

SOURCE: MD Department of State Planning

Population growth rates for other metropolitan jurisdictions in Maryland have been highly variable during this same period. The population of Montgomery County increased by almost 36 percent and is projected to grow by another 11 percent by the year 2000[3]. Howard County showed the most growth with a 184 percent increase in population between 1970 and 1990 and projections for an additional 23 percent increase by 2000. Only Baltimore City showed overall population decline--18 percent overall in the 20 years prior to 1990. The city's population is projected to decline by 3.4 percent between 1990 and 2000.

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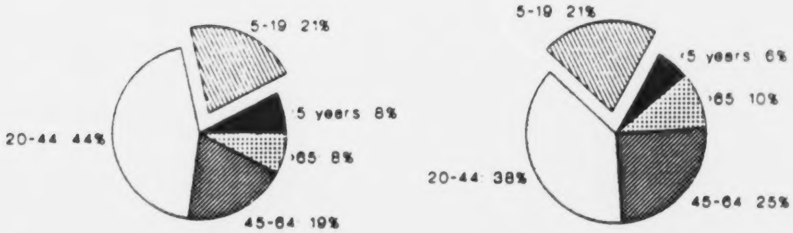
[3] Discrepancies in the "school-age population" and the public school enrollment are attributable to a number of factors, including private school enrollment and student dropouts.

Figure 2

Population Projections for Pr. George's
1990-2000: Age Band Distributions



Age Distribution: 1990
1990 Population=711,000*

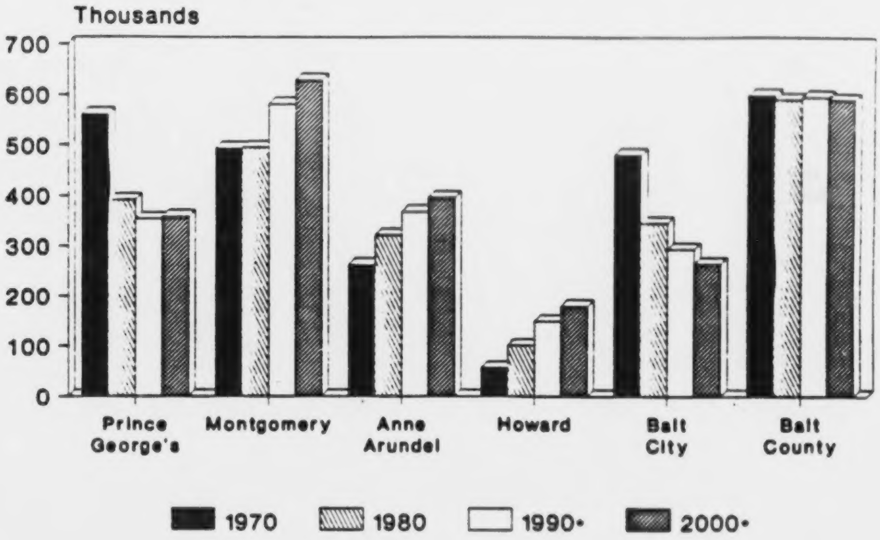
Age Distribution: 2000
2000 Population=765,000*

*U.S. Census Projections

SOURCE: MD Department of State Planning

Figure 2 depicts current and projected age band distributions using standard definitions of the U.S. Census Bureau. The most significant finding from these data is the tendency of the local and state populations to parallel national trends in terms of the relative aging of the populace. Prince George's projections call for continued overall growth in the population (by about 54,000 persons); however by the year 2000, a greater proportion of the population will converge in the "over 45" age categories, causing these age brackets to account for 35 percent of the total population, up from a current level of 27 percent. Likewise, there will be a significant decline in the 20-44 age band, from 44 to 38 percent. There will be little or no relative change in proportion of the school-age population. However, an overall increase in population of 54,000 signals an actual increase in the number of school-aged children from 148,000 in 1990 to 161,000 by 2000. These forecasts are generally consistent with the long-range enrollment projections prepared by the school system.

Figure 3



MD Population Profile: 1970-2000
White Residents: Six Maryland Counties

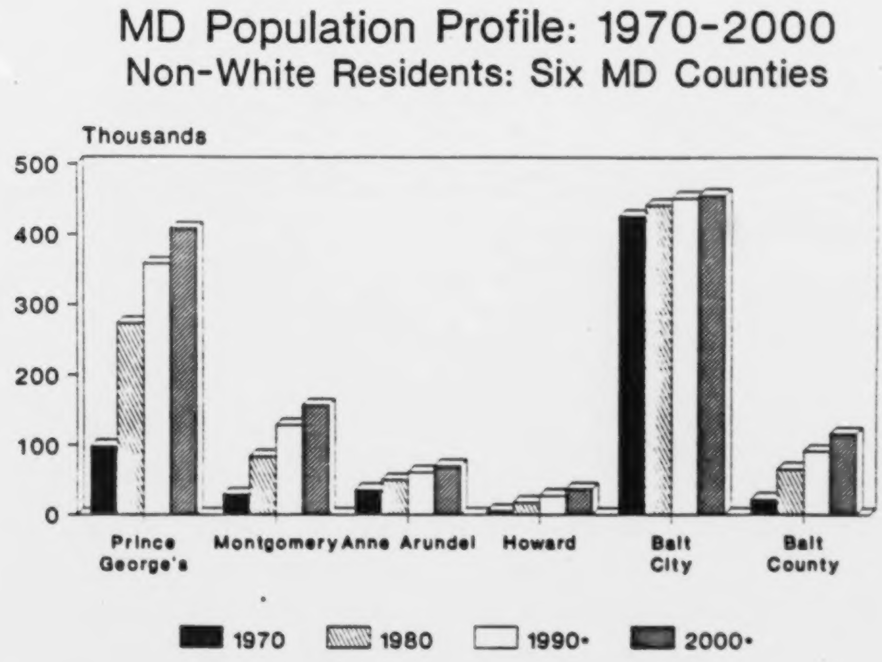
SOURCE: MD Department of State Planning

Figures 3 and 4 capture the dimension of the population change for urban and suburban areas of Maryland in terms of racial composition of the total population since 1970. The white population of Prince George's declined by 37 percent between 1970 and 1990, at which point it stabilized. Census projections predict a modest growth (1%) of this population group between 1990 and the year 2000.

Anne Arundel, Howard and Montgomery Counties are the other Washington area jurisdictions featured in Figure 3. These counties showed variable growth rates for white residents between 1970 and 1990. Montgomery County reported an 18 percent increase in the 20 years following 1970, with an additional 8 percent increase anticipated for the coming decade. Comparable trends occurred in Anne Arundel and Howard Counties. The rate of decline for Baltimore City parallels that of Prince George's, the difference in Baltimore being a continued loss of white residents through the year 2000, projected to be in the range of 10 percent. White population trends for

Baltimore County have been and are expected to remain remarkably stable through the year 2000.

Figure 4

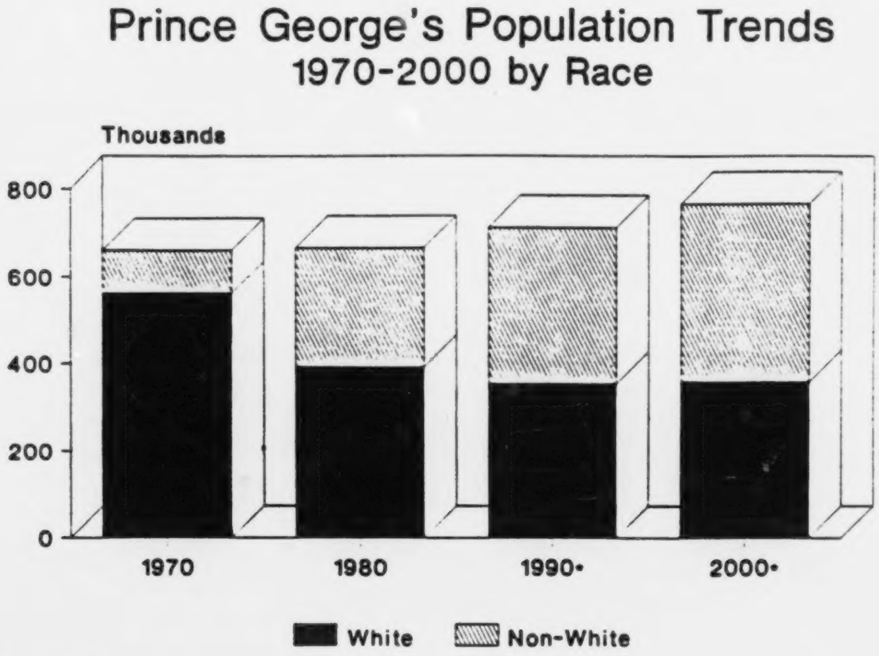


SOURCE: MD Department of State Planning

The years since 1970 have been a period of consistent increase in the proportion of non-white residents for the counties of Maryland featured in this analysis, as depicted in Figure 4. The most striking demographic change since 1970 in Maryland has been the experience of Prince George's County. Between 1970 and 1990, the black population of Prince George's increased by 262 percent--from about 100,000 in 1970 to 358,000 in 1990 as projected by the U.S. Census Bureau. By the year 2000, the black population in Prince George's County is expected to grow by an additional 50,000 (14 percent) to 410,000. More recent years have brought an increase in Hispanic and Asian/Pacific Islander populations in Prince George's and the other metropolitan counties.

Montgomery County experienced a proportionately higher increase of black residents (343%), but in this case the actual numbers are significantly smaller. Currently, black residents of Prince George's outnumber those in Montgomery County by a ratio of approximately 3-to-1. The black population of Montgomery County is expected to increase 21 percent by 2000, to a total of approximately 156,000. Baltimore City showed a 6 percent increase between 1970 and 1990 in its black population. Negligible change in the number of black residents of Baltimore City is anticipated through the year 2000.

Figure 5



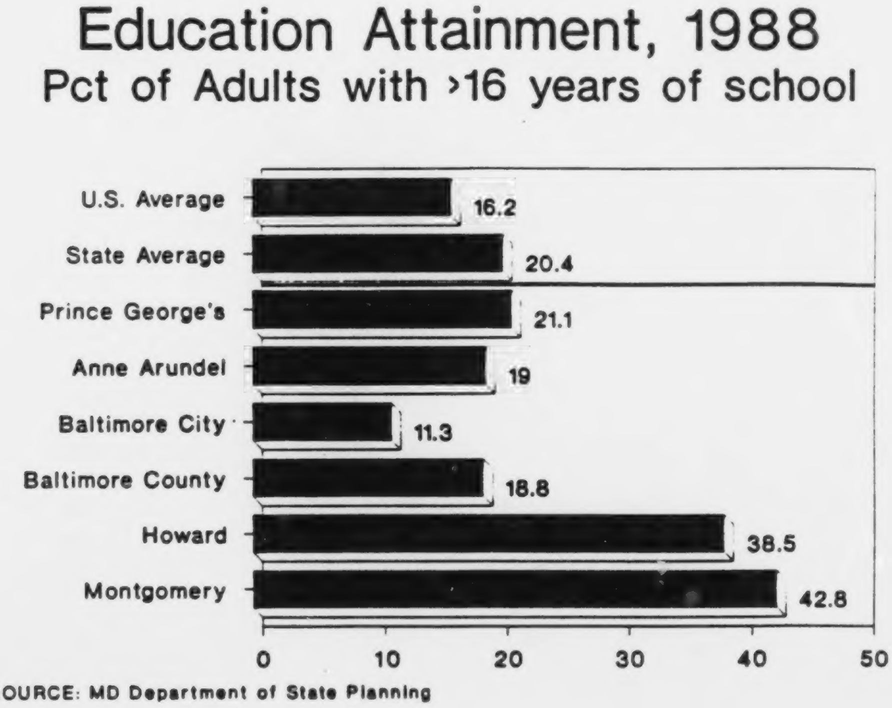
*Projected
SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau

Figure 5 presents a 30-year profile of changes in the racial composition of Prince George's County. In 1970, black citizens comprised 15 percent of the total population of Prince George's; ten years later this proportion increased to over 40 percent. Census estimates indicate that black residents now represent a majority of the population of the County. This trend is expected to continue through the year 2000, a point at which 53.3 percent of the Prince George's population will be non-white.

B. Education and Income Characteristics

Figure 6 focuses on the average percentage of adults in the population who have completed at least 16 years of formal schooling; in most cases, this captures the proportion of the population which is college-educated. Data are provided for national, state and local comparisons.

Figure 6

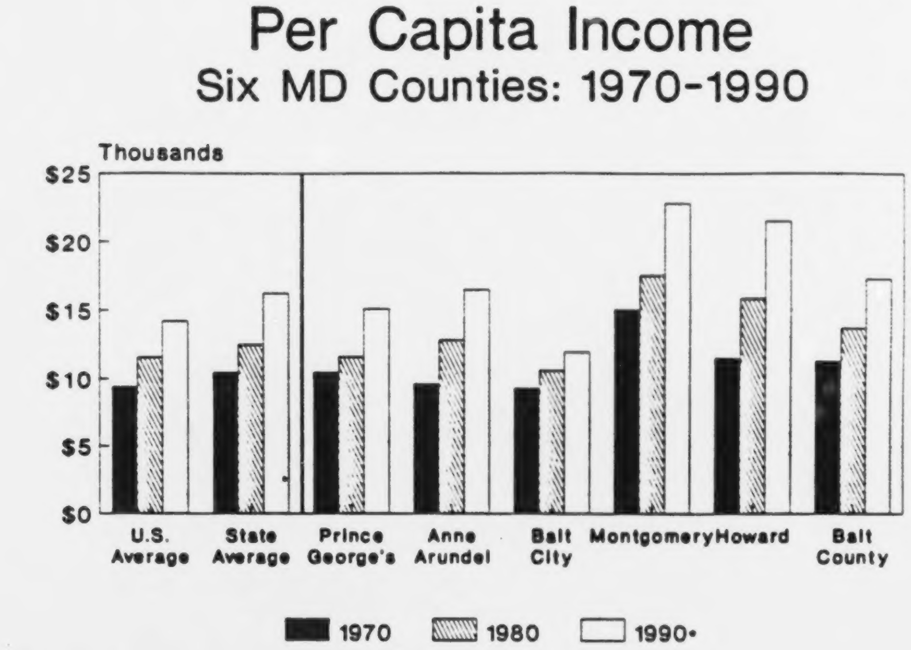


Education Attainment, 1988
Pct of Adults with >16 years of school

SOURCE: MD Department of State Planning

As of 1988, 16 percent of the adult U.S. populace had completed at least 16 years of schooling. In Maryland, the percentage was 20.4 percent--significantly higher than the rest of the U.S.. The Prince George's County average---21.1 percent---was slightly higher than the Maryland average and over five percent higher than the national comparison. Also significant is the finding that the Prince George's populace has a higher education level than the other metropolitan jurisdictions in Maryland except Montgomery and Howard Counties.

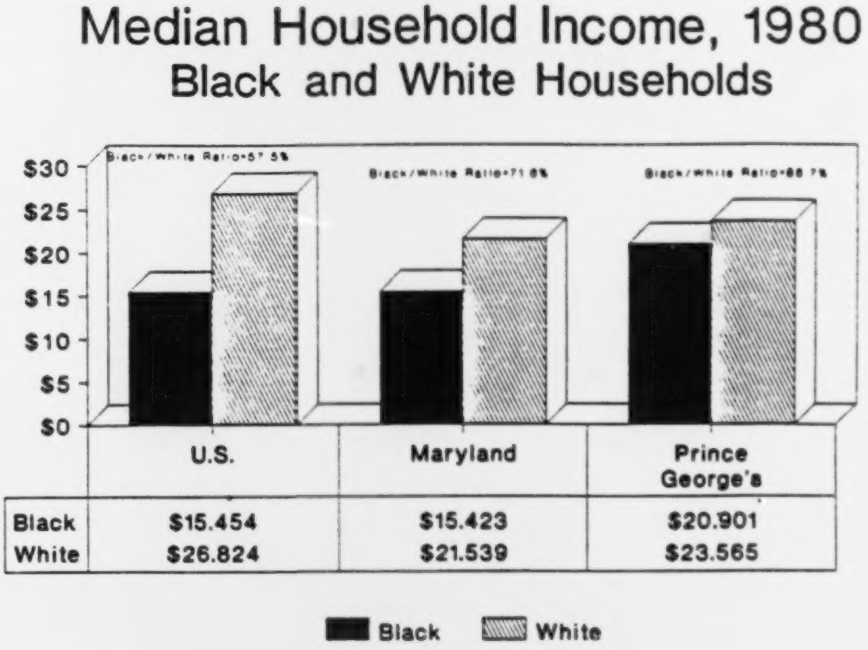
Figure 7



*Projected
SOURCE: National Planning Association

Figure 7 represents national and state per capita income data as well as statistics for the six jurisdictions in Maryland which comprise the Washington and Baltimore metropolitan areas. Data are provided for the years 1970, 1980 and 1990 (projected). At the time this report went to press, per capita income by race was not available. The current per capita income for the United States is estimated to be approximately $14,200, up 51 percent since 1970. For the state of Maryland, per capita income is $16,200, representing a 56 percent increase over the 1970-90 time frame. Per capita income for Prince George's---$15,100---is $900 higher than the national average but $1,100 less than the average for the state of Maryland. The increase in per capita income in Prince George's--44 percent since 1970--was less than both the state and national increases. Only Baltimore City had a lower per capita income level and a lower rate of increase---$11,900 and 29 percent, respectively. Comparable data for neighboring jurisdictions show Montgomery County with a per capita income of $22,800 (up 52 percent since 1970) and Howard with $21,500 (an 87 percent rise).

Figure 8



Median Household Income, 1980
Black and White Households

	U.S.	Maryland	Prince George's
Black	$15.454	$15.423	$20.901
White	$26.824	$21.539	$23.565

SOURCE: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1980

Figure 8 provides a second income statistic for comparison purposes. This graph provides data on median household income by race for the nation, the state of Maryland and Prince George's County. Unfortunately, only the 1980 census data were available at the time this report went to press. Standard cost of living increases over the ten-year period would put current household income levels approximately 50 percent higher than the 1980 statistics.

Despite the age of the data, Figure 8 does provide several useful comparisons. The 1980 median household income for white families in the United States was $26,824 and for black families, $15,454, resulting in a national income gap of approximately $11,400 between white and black families. Put another way, in 1980 the average black household income in the

United States was approximately 57 percent of the average white household income.

In Maryland the gap between black and white household income was smaller. The average black household in Maryland in 1980 had an income of $15,423; income for the average white household was $21,539. The corresponding black-to-white household income ratio for Maryland in 1980 was 72 percent. The disparity for Prince George's County was smaller still than both the Maryland and national standards. Based on 1980 census data, the average black household in Prince George's had an annual income that was 89 percent that of the average white household. At $20,901, the average black household income in Prince George's County was 35 percent higher than the national average for black households.

In summary, census projections show continued population growth overall for Prince George's County through the year 2000. Although the County population, like the rest of the nation, is aging, significant increases are predicted for all age bands, including school-aged children. In terms of racial/ethnic group composition, these projections call for a one percent rise in the number of white residents of the County and a 14 percent increase in non-white residents. This will result in an approximate racial composition for the County by the year 2000 of 53 percent nonwhite and 47 percent white. Also of note from Section I is the finding that the percentage of Prince George's residents with at least 16 years of education is higher than all other metropolitan jurisdictions in Maryland except Montgomery and Howard counties. However, the education profile is at variance with per capita income data---both in terms of absolute level and relative change since 1970. Per capita income data show Prince George's to be lower than all other metropolitan jurisdictions in Maryland except Baltimore City.

Chapter II

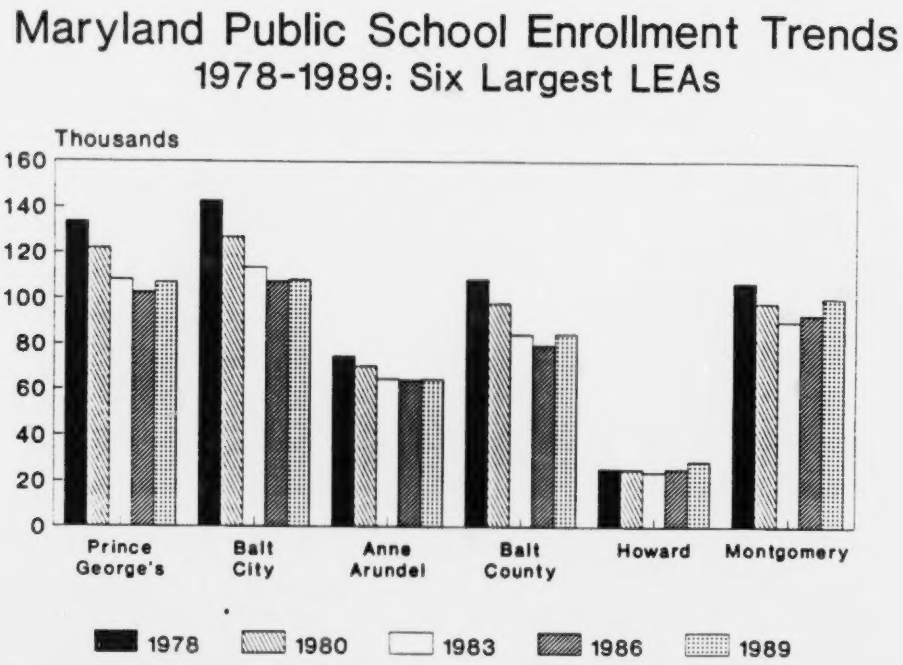
Prince George's County Schools and Youth Characteristics

Public school enrollment in Maryland since the late 1970s has paralleled national and regional trends. Section II provides an analysis of the number of students attending public schools in the six metropolitan school systems in Maryland with a special focus on the Prince George's experience. Also presented in Section II are the enrollment changes for the Prince George's County Public Schools between 1974 and 1990 and projected out to school year 1994. Parallel developments in the school system's desegregation efforts are also described. Other data presented in Section II include a summary of the percentage of students participating in the federal lunch program since 1977 and several graphs which depict the rising incidence of drug-related crime among youth in Prince George's County.

A. Enrollment Characteristics

Figure 9 provides data on public school enrollment since 1978 for the six metropolitan school systems of Maryland. Space limitations required a sampling of five enrollment intervals for this twelve-year period (1978, 1980, 1983, 1986, 1989), which capture the enrollment trends for this twelve-year period.

Figure 9


Maryland Public School Enrollment Trends
1978-1989: Six Largest LEAs

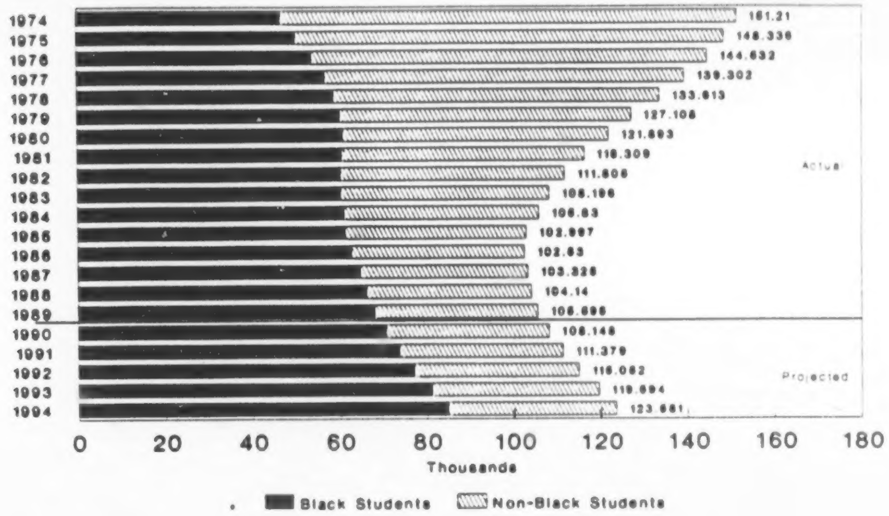
SOURCE: MSDE Office of Planning

While the size of enrollment varies greatly among the six featured school systems, the general direction of the trend lines is similar. Prince George's County, with a 1978 enrollment of approximately 134,000 declined to about 102,500 in 1986. Beginning in 1988 (not shown) the Prince George's enrollment began to climb, a trend which is projected to continue well into the current decade.

The other metropolitan school systems of Maryland experienced enrollment trends similar to Prince George's during the 1980s. There are minor variances for individual systems---the decline in Baltimore City was more considerable and abrupt; Anne Arundel experienced a smaller decline and a more moderate increase; Howard and Montgomery Counties began their recovery a few years before the others and their gains have been larger. Like Prince George's, the other metropolitan LEAs are projecting continued enrollment growth through 1995.

Figure 10

Historical and Projected Enrollment
1974-1994



SOURCE: PGCPS Dpt of Pupil Accounting

Figure 10 provides greater detail on both the actual and projected enrollment by race for Prince George's County for the period 1974 through 1994. The Prince George's County Public Schools enrolled 151,210 students in 1974-75, with a black student enrollment of 30.8 percent. By 1989-90, the enrollment slipped to 105,595, black students comprising 64.5 percent of that total. The Board of Education projects that by 1994 the total enrollment will increase to a pre-1980 level of 124,000, and that black students will represent 69 percent of the total enrollment for the system. Thus, in a twenty year span the total enrollment in Prince George's County will have decreased by 18 percent while the corresponding black student enrollment will have increased by over 90 percent.

B. The Scope of the Magnet and Milliken School Programs in Prince George's County

Parties to the Prince George's County school desegregation case revised their equity strategy in 1985 by turning to magnet schools and Milliken relief to augment the existing student assignment plan. At the time plaintiffs and the Board of Education agreed that these desegregation strategies would be the most effective means of achieving the court-approved guidelines. This agreement also stipulated that compensatory and enrichment resources (Milliken II relief) would be provided for schools with limited integration.

Accordingly, Prince George's County began implementation of its Milliken strategy in September 1985, targeting ten predominantly black elementary schools which had experienced recent difficulty maintaining the court-approved enrollment guidelines. By September 1988, the school system had deployed Milliken relief to six more elementary schools with similar enrollment characteristics[4] .

The Milliken elementary program is distinguished from the regular comprehensive program by the following educational features:

*Reduced instructional staff-to-students ratio (1-to-20)

*Full-day kindergarten

*Full-time guidance counselor

*Full-time media specialist

*Full-time reading specialist

*Full-time computer labs

*Take-home computer program

*Reading, language arts, and math enrichment programs

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[4] In 1987-88 the Milliken model was replicated in one middle school and two high schools.

*Enhanced field trip program

*Cultural arts program

*After school tutoring program

*Summer enrichment program

*The Comer School Development Program

The Milliken model adheres closely to the principles articulated in the school reform and effective schools literature. This comprehensive school improvement strategy emphasizes the basic instructional program, supporting services, computer-assisted instruction and the home-school relationship.

First, the Milliken strategy provides an enriched instructional program, largely through greater attention to the individual human and academic needs of the child. This is accomplished by increasing the ratio of adults to students in the school setting. Milliken schools are staffed with additional classroom teachers and a full-time counselor, full-time reading specialist, full-time math specialist and a computer coordinator. Second, Milliken II schools in Prince George's County provide significant extended day and extended school year components. The Milliken program also provides a full-day kindergarten, after-school tutorials and a summer remedial program. The Milliken model supports an enriched academic curriculum through the in-school computer lab and a computer lending program. These elements, combined with general enrichment of the core curriculum and an emphasis on experiential learning through field trips, serve to enhance the overall instructional program and make it relevant to the daily lives of their students.

The Comer School Development Program, designed in part to strengthen the linkage between home and school, represents the fourth element of the Milliken model. Given recent societal changes concerning family and community structures, it has become doubly important for the child to receive support that is coordinated between the home and their schools. The School Development Program brings parents back into the process through which important school decisions are made. Parents and teachers collaborate on school planning and governance committees to adapt the school program to the specific needs of students and, ultimately, to protect students against the threat of community poverty and violence.

The 1985 desegregation Memorandum of Understanding also provided for the establishment of a significant number of "magnet school" programs which feature a unique programmatic focus. The initially selected schools originally either had black enrollments in excess of 80 percent, or were projected to have such enrollments in the near future. The primary goals of the magnet school program are: (1) to reduce minority group isolation by attracting sufficient numbers of non-black students to schools where the enrollment was in excess of 80 percent and, conversely, attracting black students to schools where the percentage of black enrollment was below 10 percent, and (2) to provide instructional programs designed to strengthen basic skills, while simultaneously encouraging students to develop their talent in specialized areas of the curriculum, such as math and science, creative arts, a foreign language, and the like. Moreover, the racial composition of magnet schools in the aggregate (approximately 60 percent black, 40 percent "other") is a reflection of the overall system-wide racial composition in the Prince George's County schools.

The scope of the magnet school program in Prince George's County has expanded considerably since the first year of the program. In the fall of 1985, the system began its magnet school effort by providing two magnet themes at 12 schools; presently, 14 magnet themes are offered in 47 schools. As of September 1989, 18,385 students were enrolled in a magnet school program in Prince George's County. This accounts for approximately 18 percent of the total school system enrollment.

C. Poverty Concentration and Youth Crime

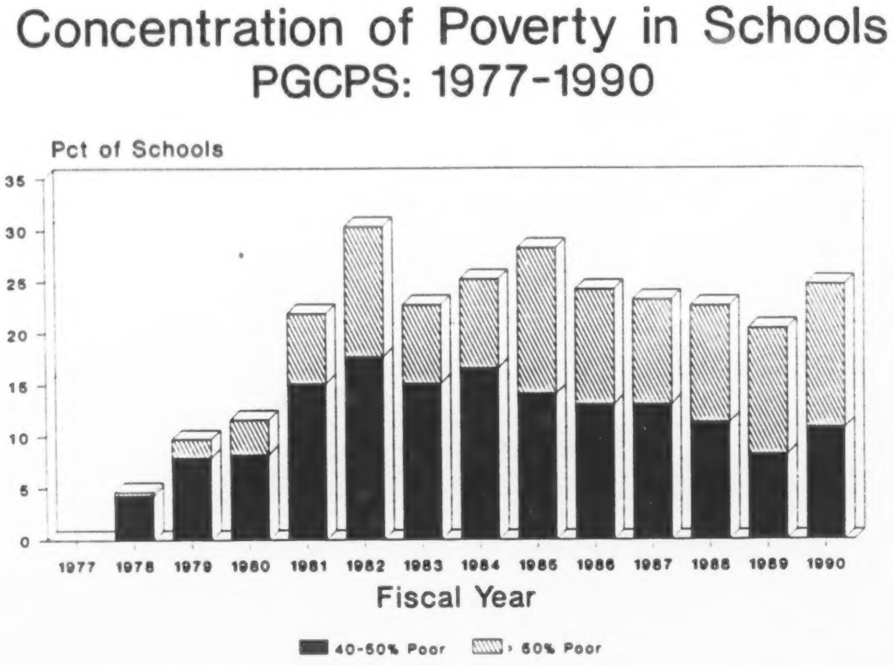
The standard by which school systems in Maryland measure school-level poverty is the percentage of students in the school who participate in the federally-funded free and reduced lunch program. This indicator presents significant problems familiar to policy analysts, the most significant being the self-reported nature of this statistic and that it requires parents to respond in writing to income-related questions. While still problematic, federal lunch data tend to be a better poverty indicator for elementary schools, given the inclination of older students to view program participation as a social stigma. Bearing this out are the 1989-90 free and reduced lunch program statistics, summarized by grade level:

--elementary schools: 31.2 percent

--middle schools: 24.4 percent

--high schools: 6.3 percent

Figure 11



Concentration of Poverty in Schools
PGCPS: 1977-1990

SOURCE: Dept. of Food Svs. (PGCPS)

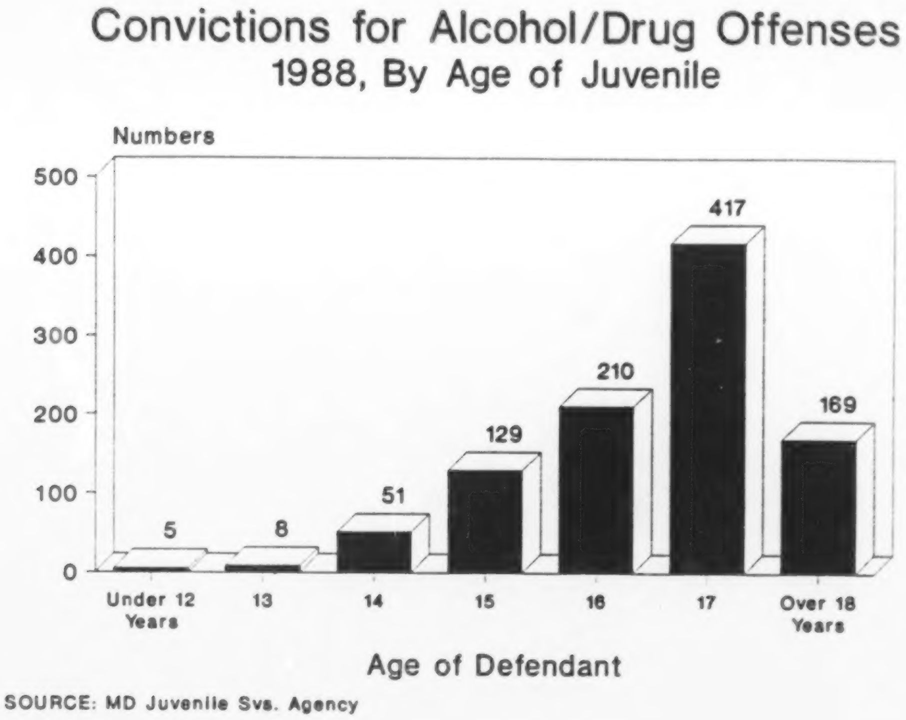
Notwithstanding the problems associated with using the free/reduced lunch data as an indicator of absolute poverty in a school, this statistic does provide useful trend data with which to assess the relative change in the concentration of poverty in individual schools or in a school system.

Figure 11 shows the rapid acceleration over the past 12 years in the number of Prince George's County schools which serve high concentrations of economically disadvantaged students. The vertical bar represents the percentage of schools in Prince George's County where in excess of 40 percent of the enrollment is participating in the free or reduced lunch program. The hatched portion of the bar represents schools where over 50 percent of the students participate in the free lunch program.

As shown in Figure 11, in 1977-78 not one school in Prince George's County had in excess of 40 percent of their enrollments in the free/reduced lunch program. The following year signalled the start of a rapid increase in the level of school poverty, rising to a peak in 1982-83 when over one-third of the schools in the County were serving students enrolled in the federal lunch program. This level diminished first in the early 1980s and again in 1985. These decreases in the concentration of poverty in individual schools were likely due to the effectiveness of the County's desegregation efforts. This resulted in a general dispersion of high pockets of poverty, first through school boundary changes and more recently with the magnet school program. Data for 1989-90 show a significant increase in the percentage of schools with over 40 percent of their enrollment in the federal lunch program.

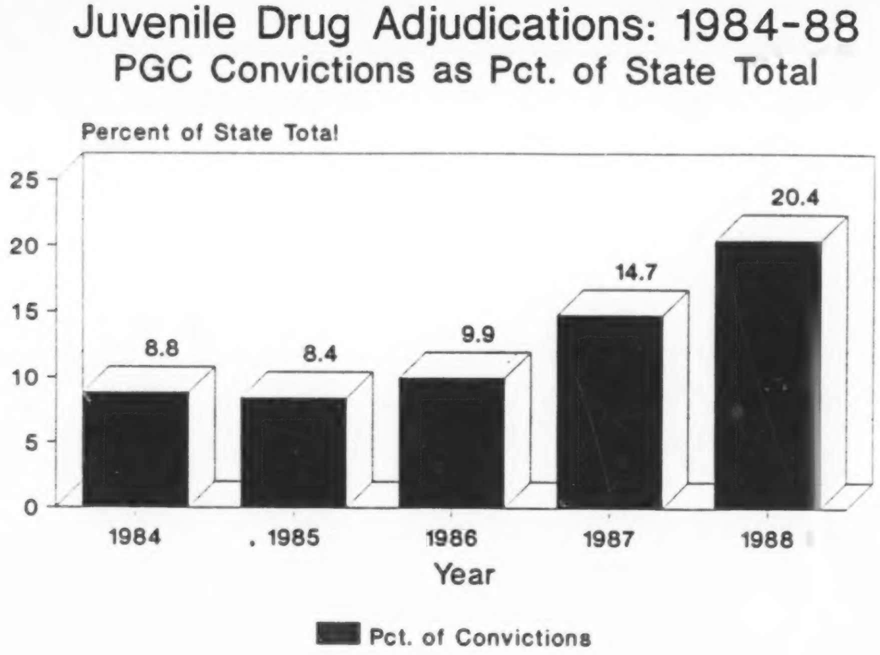
Figures 12 through 14 provide a profile of the changing rate of juvenile crime in the State of Maryland and in Prince George's County. Data are provided on the rising incidence of juvenile drug and alcohol convictions in Prince George's County, as well as various background characteristics of youths convicted of a drug or alcohol offense, i.e. age, race and sex.

Figure 12



In 1988 there were 990 juveniles in the State of Maryland convicted of a drug or alcohol offense. As shown in Figure 12, approximately 42 percent of these youth were 17 years old, followed by 16-year olds which comprised 21 percent of the total offenders. Most disturbing is the finding that nearly 20 percent of all drug or alcohol convictions were individuals who were 15 years of age and under.

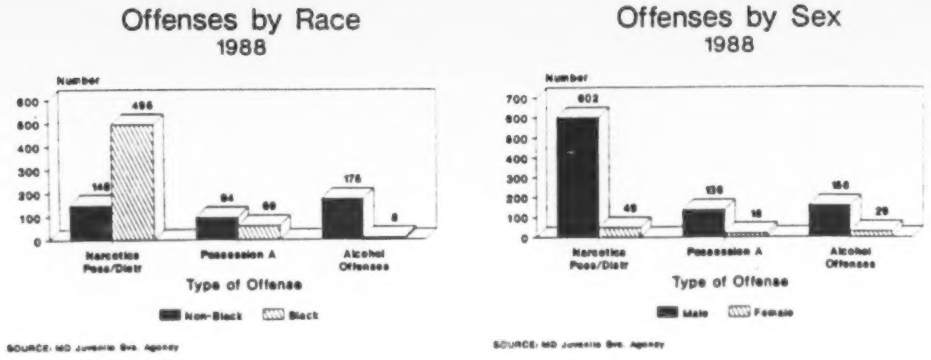
Figure 13



SOURCE: MD Juvenile Svs. Agency

Figure 13 represents the percentage of Maryland youths with a drug or alcohol conviction in 1988 who were residents of Prince George's County. Figure 13 shows a steep increase since 1987 in the percentage of Prince George's County youth who have been convicted of drug or alcohol offenses in the State of Maryland. For 1988, one in five youths convicted of a drug or alcohol offense lived in Prince George's County; this compares to one in ten just two years earlier. By contrast, in 1988 approximately one in seven youths in the state of Maryland resided in Prince George's County. Though not shown in Figure 13, during the same period Baltimore City accounted for 40 percent of these youth convictions, down from 44 percent in 1984.

Figure 14



Offenses by Race
1988

SOURCE: MD Juvenile Svs. Agency

Offenses by Sex
1988

SOURCE: MD Juvenile Svs. Agency

Finally, Figure 14 provides race and sex data for three major types of alcohol and drug offenses. Because sex-race cross-tabulation data do not exist for these categories, the two groups must be viewed separately; nevertheless, clear patterns of behavior emerge[5]. First, blacks (over 80%) and males (over 90%) account for the vast majority of youth convictions for the most serious drug-related offenses, i.e. narcotic possession and distribution. By contrast, the alcohol-related convictions are overwhelming white (over 95%) and, again, male. The relatively few number of paraphernalia or marijuana possession convictions are also male-dominated, but generally mixed in terms of race.

Like the population overall, the fifteen years prior to 1990 brought dramatic changes in public school enrollment in Prince George's County. The marked decline in enrollment, from a recent high of 163,000 in 1971-72 to a low of 103,000 in 1987-88, was also important for the nature of this change. During this 20-year period black students increased from 22.4 percent of total enrollment in 1970-71 to the 1989-90 level of 64.5 percent of total. Both the total enrollment and percentage of black students are projected to increase at least through the middle of the current decade.

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[5] Data in figure 14 are presented in three categories---"Narc Poss/Distr," "Possession-A" and "Alcohol Offenses." These three categories were formed by consolidating the original nine classifications of offenses conceived by the Juvenile Services Agency. "Narc Poss/District" includes "Possession of Narcotics with the Intent to Distribute" and "Possession of Narcotics." The second category, "Possession-A" consists of "Possession of Narcotic Paraphernalia" and "Possession of Marijuana." The final category, "Alcohol Offenses," includes "Glue Sniffing of Toxic Substance, " Driving Impaired," "Driving Intoxicated," "Alcohol Beverage Violation," and "Alcohol Beverage Citation."

Paralleling the decline in total students and increase in the enrollment of black students has been an increase in the concentration of economically disadvantaged students in the schools. Lately, this level of school poverty shows signs of increasing. An artifact of increasing poverty in the schools and communities is the rising incidence of drug-related crime among youth in Prince George's County.

Chapter III

Student Grouping and Course Enrollment Trends in the Prince George's County Public Schools

In recent years a spate of educational research has examined the effects of classifying and grouping students by academic ability. Commonly referred to as tracking in secondary schools and ability grouping in the elementary years, these practices have the effect of steering students along qualitatively different academic pathways (Goodlad, 1984; Oakes, 1986). Elementary students in the lower ability groups have access to a more limited band of the curriculum than classmates in more advanced groups. Middle and high school students in general or vocational tracks take a fundamentally separate academic program, resulting in what some observers have characterized as a hierarchy of the curriculum (Calfee and Brown, 1977; Clewell, 1988; College Board, 1990).

The practice of grouping students by some metric of ability is defended by its advocates as the best way for American schools to deal with the wide ranging diversity in student background characteristics, interests and skill levels. Proponents view tracking as an efficient management tool by which academic programs can be tailored to the skills of different groups of students. Moreover, there is the view that placing slower students in academic competition with higher achieving peers will cause less advanced students emotional damage and hasten their departure from school; likewise, some fear that bright students will suffer by being placed in classes with less able peers. The final defense of the tracking system is that there is sufficient flexibility in the system for students to move up a track or, in the case of elementary students, into a higher ability group if their rate of academic progress warrants such a change.

Yet, research on school organization and structures has found that student tracking as it exists in most public school systems in America is less flexible than its advocates maintain (Good and Brophy, 1984). The likelihood is remote that middle school students in low level classes will participate in college preparatory courses during high school. The 60 to 70 percent of high school students in general or vocational tracks are exposed to clear and consistent disadvantages due to their participation in vacuous, non-challenging courses and isolation from their high achieving peers (Chubb, 1988; Slavin, 1988; Oakes, 1985). Initial differences in achievement levels of students in upper and lower tracks widen over time (Alexander and McDill, 1976; Persell, 1976; Rosenbaum, 1980). Moreover, these material differences in coursework are not lost on students in lower groups. Evidence exists that these students suffer diminished self-concept and confidence due to their participation in what they perceive to be as the "dumb" classes (Cohen, 1984).

Another line of research has explored school process variables and found a bifurcated curriculum offering high and low status knowledge (Gamoran, 1987). A related concern is the equal access youngsters have to high quality instruction, given the tendency of most schools to assign their best teachers to the advanced courses (Darling-Hammond, 1989). Thus, there is an equity dimension to the tracking problem, i.e. equal access to a school's most precious resources--its most talented instructional staff (Braddock, 1989).

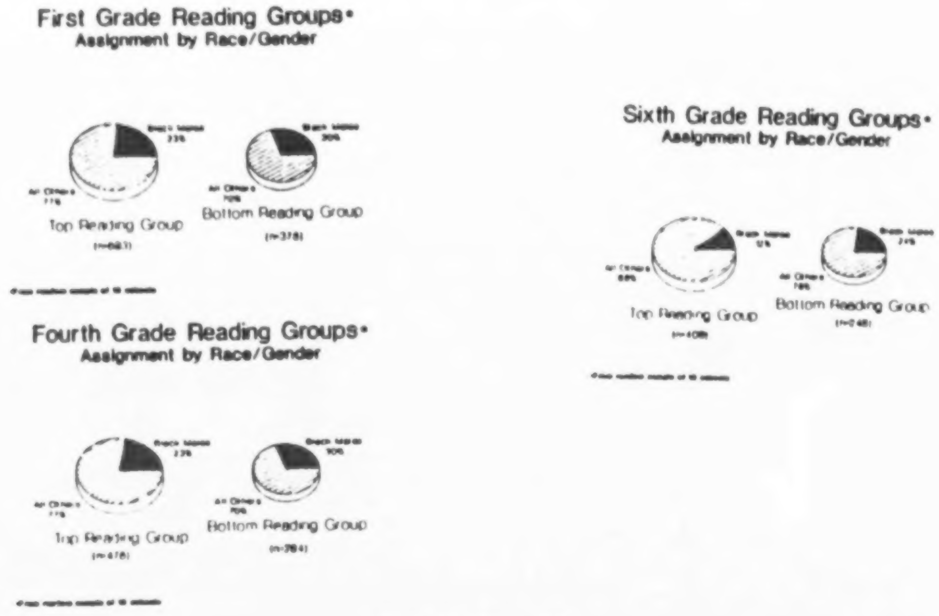
A recent report by the College Board and the Council of Great City Schools advises school systems to "develop and support programs which provide alternatives to tracking, labeling and homogeneous grouping" (College Board and Council of Great City Schools, 1990). In a related recommendation, the group urged public schools to ensure that equitable criteria are used to determine students' access to algebra. The College Board study determined that algebra is the strongest single predictor of a student's ability to continue on to college. Other authorities have called for a reduction in the emphasis on scope and sequence in favor of a concept-based orientation and instructional arrangements which promote peer tutoring and cooperative learning among students in heterogeneous groupings (Slavin, 1988).

A. Achievement Grouping in the Elementary Schools of Prince George's County

Recent analyses have determined that tracking and similar forms of student grouping are inexorable problems which pervade American educational practice. Further, minority students tend to be disproportionately handicapped by these policies. Braddock (1989) reports that African American, Hispanic and Native American students are more likely to be assigned to remedial or the least challenging courses. This agrees with an assessment by Oakes (1987) which found that once assigned students tend to remain in the lowest stratum of the curriculum for the remainder of their school days. A 1988 analysis by the Educational Testing Service (ETS) concluded that "only 26 percent and 32 percent of Hispanic and Black high school seniors, respectively, were enrolled in a college preparatory curriculum, as compared to 39 percent of Whites."

The principal theme of the national debate on tracking has been the consequences of this practice for high school students. The Prince George's County analysis, however, searched for and found signs of early trouble in the middle and upper elementary grades, especially with the approach most schools use to teach reading.

Figure 15



First Grade Reading Groups*
Assignment by Race/Gender

Fourth Grade Reading Groups*
Assignment by Race/Gender

Sixth Grade Reading Groups*
Assignment by Race/Gender

To determine the origins of the problem, the Office of Research and the Division of Instruction gathered reading group data from 18 comprehensive schools chosen at random from the universe of 68 comprehensive schools in the County. Researchers asked teachers to report the racial and gender characteristics of their reading groups for grades 1, 4 and 6.

Figure 15 shows the reading group distributions for the three grade levels studied. Black males comprised about 25 percent of the total enrollment in these schools and classes; accordingly, the proportional representation for this group would be one-fourth of each of these pies.

Most teachers in school year 1989-90 organized their reading classes into three groups according to some assessment of student achievement. This analysis was interested only in significant disparities in the racial/gender composition for the highest and lowest groups. For teachers who organize in only two groups, data were collected on the membership of their high and low reading groups.

First grade data in Figure 15 show an approximately normal distribution for the reading groups by race and gender, i.e. the participation rates of black males in the high and low groups is comparable to the overall percentage of black males in the school. This favorable trend is also true for fourth grade students (middle pie chart). Once again only seven percentage points separate the high and low reading groups.

However, something serious happens between the end of fourth grade and the beginning of sixth grade. By that time the disparity between high achieving black males and low achieving black males grows from the seven percentage point gap in grade four to 12 percentage points. More disturbing is the sharp decline in the proportion of black males in the highest reading groups. By sixth grade only about one in ten students in the high reading group is a black male, down from about three in ten just two years earlier.

B. Course Enrollment Trends in the Middle and High Schools

Perhaps the most striking statistic relevant to the issue of course enrollment patterns in Prince George's County was furnished by one school system official familiar with the County's array of secondary school course offerings. This individual noted that the official computerized index of secondary school courses for the County lists in excess of 1,600 courses. Granted, many of these are the wide range of independent studies, assistantships and community service projects, but other courses are the result of the sheer range of instructional levels depicted in Figure 16.

Figure 16

Hierarchy of Instructional Levels
PGC Middle and High School Courses

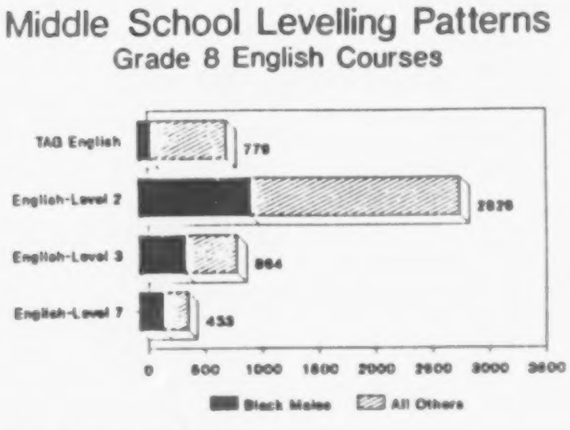
- "0": Unlevelled
- "1": Above average
- "2": Average
- "3": Below average
- "4": Marked deficiency
- "5": SLRD-Average skills
- "6": SLRD-Below average skills
- "7": Mainstreamed special education
- "8": Self-contained special education
- "9": Talented and gifted

Academic coursework in the middle and high schools of Prince George's County conforms to the nine levels listed in Figure 16. Some of these categories represent gradations of academic skill level; others are designed to meet the needs of special populations of students such as those in the talented and gifted and special education programs.

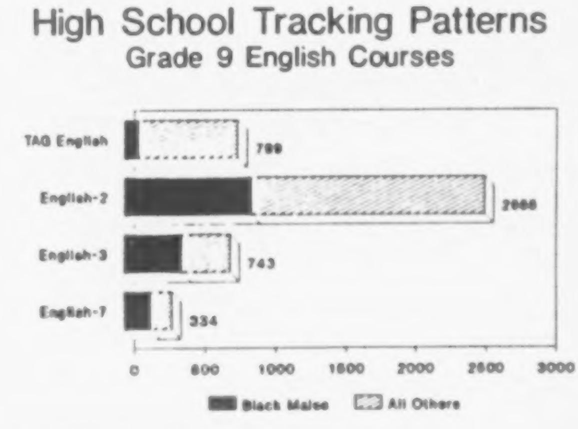
The remaining discussion in this section describes the gender and racial characteristics of the enrollment of key courses in the middle and high schools. The analysis attempts to capture the full range of courses, from the most advanced levels which have stringent entrance criteria and prerequisites, e.g. TAG-English, AP History, AP Physics, Calculus---to courses designed for students with lowest levels of skill development, e.g. Consumer Math and the levels 3, 4 and 7 courses. The purpose of this analysis is to discern the degree to which all students are proportionally represented across a range of middle and high school courses, with a particular focus on the enrollment trends for black males.

Figures 17 through 21 show the relative representation of black males in selected courses for grades 8 through 12. The solid segment of the bar represents the number of black males enrolled in each course. The hatched portion represents the course's enrollment of all other students in Prince George's County. Because black males comprise roughly one-third of the enrollment in the middle and high schools, a proportional representation of black males in each course would be reflected by a solid segment which occupies approximately one-third of the total bar.

Figure 17



SOURCE PGC 9/90 Course Enrollment Data



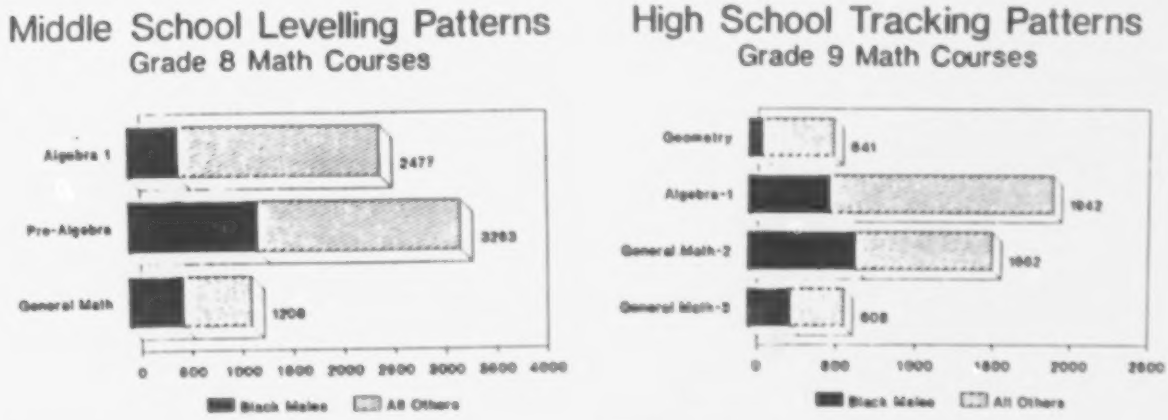
SOURCE PGC 9/90 Course Enrollment Data

Figure 17 compares course enrollment patterns in grades eight and nine for selected English courses. This analysis pays particular attention to the middle school-high school juncture, given the degree to which much of the student's high school schedule is dictated by their middle school course of studies.

The top display, for eighth graders, shows that black males were significantly underrepresented in the Grade 8 English courses for the talented and gifted (TAG). Of 779 students enrolled in the eighth grade TAG English program throughout the system, only 107 (14 percent) were black males. In the Level 2 English course (Average Level) black males comprised 35 percent of the 2,826 students enrolled. Black males were overrepresented in Level 3 English (Below average) by 13 percent and Level 7 English (mainstreamed special education) by 15 percent, relative to their proportion of the total Grade 8 enrollment.

The Grade 9 enrollment for English courses is a perfect image of the patterns seen in the Grade 8 graph. Significant underrepresentation of black males in TAG English and overrepresentation in below average and special education courses are as apparent for ninth graders as they were for the eighth grade cohort.

Figure 18



SOURCE:PGC 9/90 Course Enrollment Data

SOURCE:PGC 9/90 Course Enrollment Data

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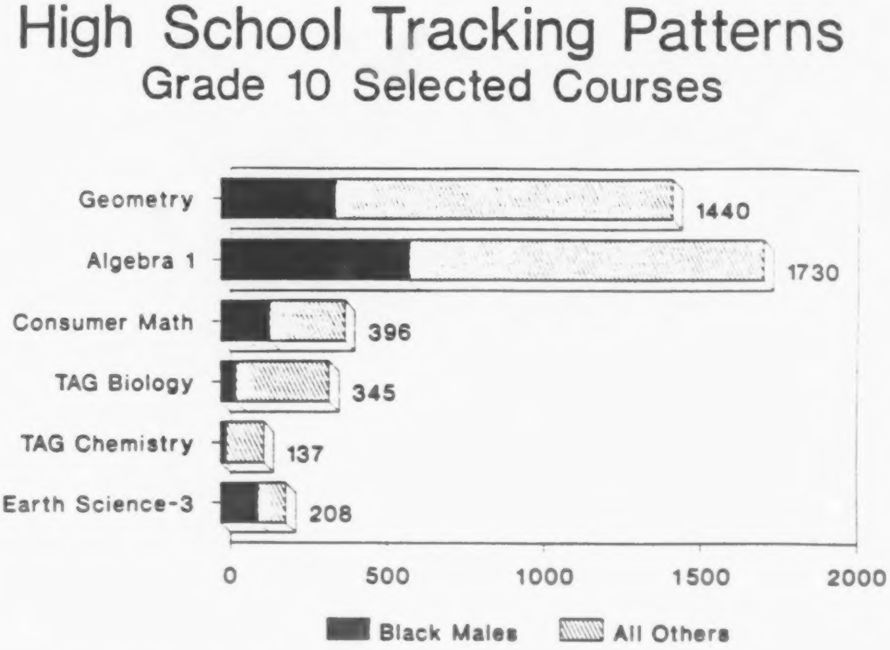
Figure 18 is the mathematics companion to the English data seen in Figure 17. These graphs present a substantially different picture of course enrollment patterns for eighth and ninth graders in mathematics. In large part this is due to the Board's approval of a recommendation by the Superintendent to provide more middle school students access to pre-algebra and algebra. This policy change was based on definitive national evidence that algebra and pre-algebra serve as gateway courses to other college preparatory courses and college acceptance itself.

The top graph in Figure 18 captures the impact of that policy change. Upper level eighth grade math courses, namely Algebra-1 and Pre-Algebra, not only were heavily enrolled by all students, but the disproportions for black males, while still significant, were not as severe as those seen in the English analysis. The grade 8 data tell us that over 5,700 eighth graders were enrolled in Algebra or Pre-Algebra in 1989-90. This enrollment represents approximately 75 percent of the eighth grade cohort for 1989-90.

In contrast are the enrollment patterns of ninth graders in 1989-90, students who studied math in the eighth grade before the new algebra policy went into effect. Consequently only 541 ninth graders, representing six percent of students at that grade level, were taking Geometry. Ninth grade Algebra-1 enrolled 1,942 students, or 23 percent of the total enrollment for that grade. More disturbing is the abysmally low enrollment of black males in these courses. Black males comprised 16 percent (86 students) of the Grade 9 Geometry students in the County; likewise, only about 514 of the almost 3,000 black males in the ninth grade were enrolled in Algebra-1.

From these two graphs, one can project that by 1990-91 the Grade 9 Geometry and Algebra bars will grow as a result of the increase in 1989-90 participation rates of eighth graders in the gateway math courses. The school system anticipates that this will also cause a simultaneous shrinkage in the General Math courses which presently enroll over one-fourth of ninth graders in Prince George's County.

Figure 19



High School Tracking Patterns
Grade 10 Selected Courses

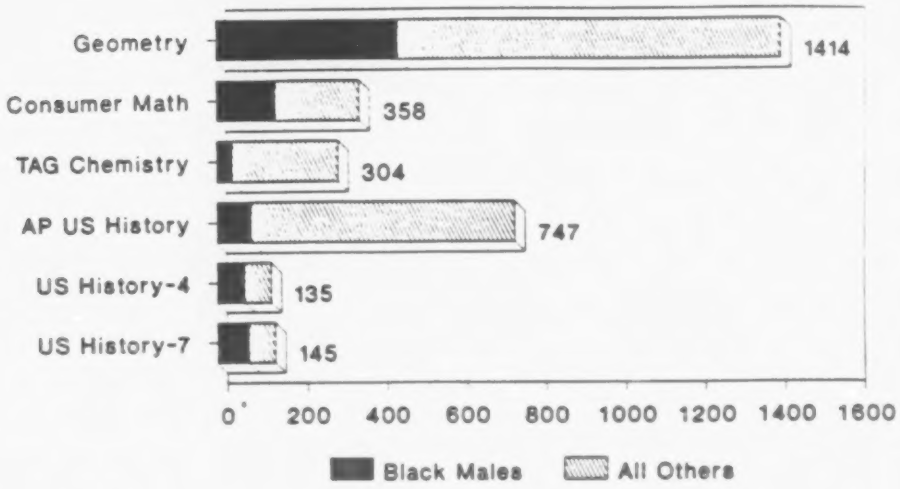
SOURCE:PGC 9/89 Course Enrollment Data

Figure 19 contains a summary of course enrollment patterns for Grade 10, with a focus on math and science. In Geometry, 367 students, or 26 percent of the County's 1440 participating students were black male. Likewise, black males made up 35 percent of the 1,730 tenth grade students in Algebra-1. On its surface, the Algebra data may seem like an improvement over the participation rates for eighth and ninth graders; however, for college aspirants tenth grade is somewhat late in the matriculation cycle to be taking algebra for the first time.

Substantial disparities existed in the tenth grade advanced science courses such as TAG Biology and TAG Chemistry where fewer than 15 percent of the students were black males. Conversely, in the "below average" Earth Science course, black males represented almost 60 percent of the total enrollment, almost twice their proportion in the total enrollment.

Figure 20

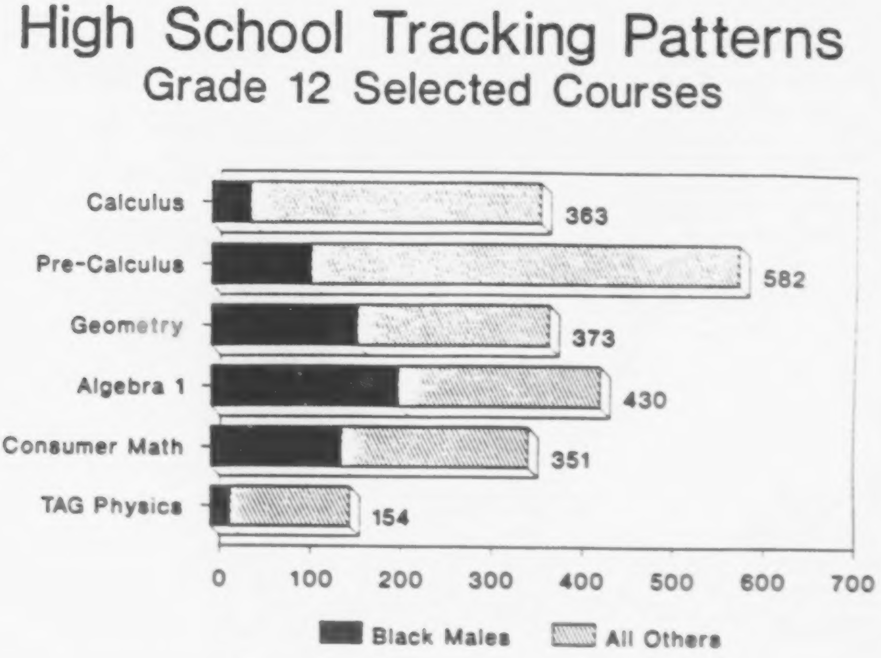
High School Tracking Patterns
Grade 11 Selected Courses



SOURCE:PGC 9/89 Course Enrollment Data

Figure 20 shows that the disproportions in the enrollment of black males persist into the eleventh grade. Fewer than 15 percent of the enrollment in TAG Chemistry and AP History were black male, yet over half of the students in the less challenging courses or in special education, e.g. U.S. History-4, U.S. History-7, were black males. Keeping in mind that 31 percent of eleventh graders were black males, the gap between the proportion of this group in the most advanced courses and the regular population approaches 20 percentage points.

Figure 21



SOURCE:PGC 9/89 Course Enrollment Data

Figure 21 provides a course enrollment profile for the 1989-90 senior class in which black males represented 31 percent of the total enrollment[6]. Apparent from this graph is the fact that enrollment patterns for this final year of school are at least as rigid as in the earlier grades. Black males were severely underrepresented in the school system's most challenging courses: Calculus (14 percent of total), pre-calculus (12 percent of total) and TAG Physics (19 percent of total). Likewise, black males were overrepresented in such courses as Geometry and Algebra-1, good courses in their own right, but too late in the matriculation cycle to do high school seniors much good beyond meeting graduation requirements. As in previous years, black males comprised the largest student group in the Consumer Math course.

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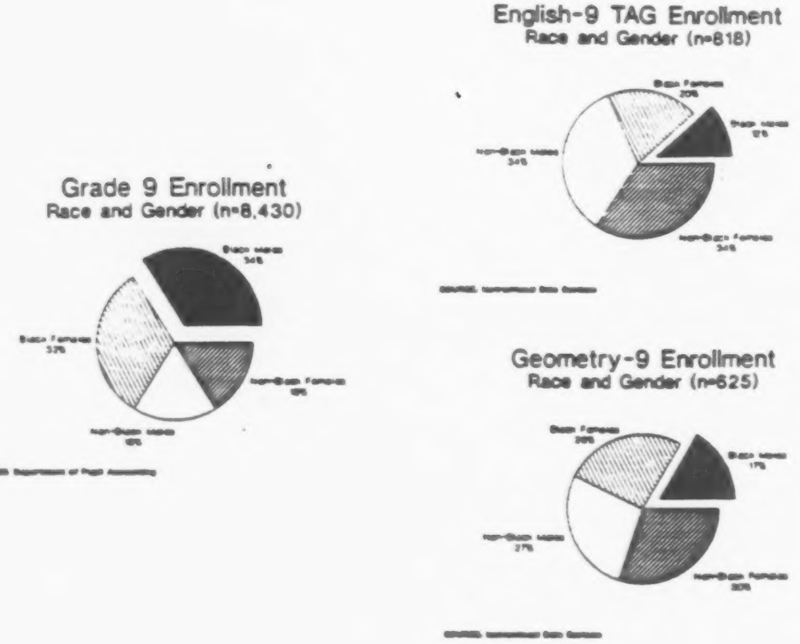
[6] Note that the proportion of black males in the overall enrollment declines steadily from middle school through high school. Black males comprised 34.8 percent of seventh graders and 30.7 percent of high school seniors. The principal cause of this difference is a dropout rate which is higher for black males than other student groups.

The previous discussions have focused on the enrollment patterns for black males and their relative representation in the array of middle and high school courses. The four graphs which follow provide data on the participation rates of black males and the other student populations in the school system, i.e. black females, non-black males and non-black females. The analysis presents enrollment profiles for two courses at each grade level. The enlarged graph represents the actual distribution of the grade level enrollment according to the four major student groups. The chief focus of the analysis in Figures 22 through 25 is the disparity between the enrollment of the four student groups in the general enrollment and their enrollment in specific courses[7].

Figure 22



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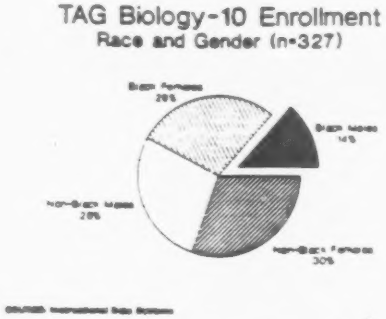
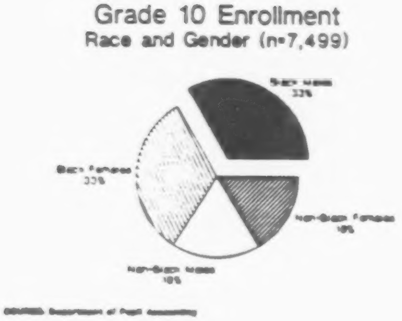
[7] As an example, black males comprise 34 percent of the grade nine enrollment but only 17 percent of the Geometry enrollment at that grade level. The corresponding participation disparity would be 17 percentage points.

Figure 22 displays enrollment patterns for two challenging ninth grade courses, Talented and Gifted (TAG)--English and Geometry. These data show a large disparity for black males in ninth grade TAG English (22 percentage points) and black females (12 percentage points). Conversely, non-black males were overrepresented by 16 points and non-black females by 18 percentage points. TAG English contained the single largest participation disparity of all courses examined in this analysis. The Geometry-9 enrollment is summarized is Figure 22. While less severe than the TAG-English disparities, significant enrollment gaps existed for black males in this course (17 percentage points). An important finding from this graph is that black females are more strongly represented in this course than their male peers. Non-black males and non-black females show high participation rates in Geometry relative to their proportions in the total grade 9 enrollment.

Figure 23





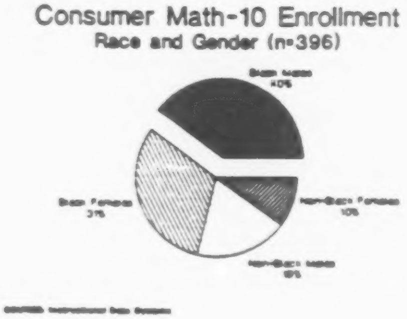
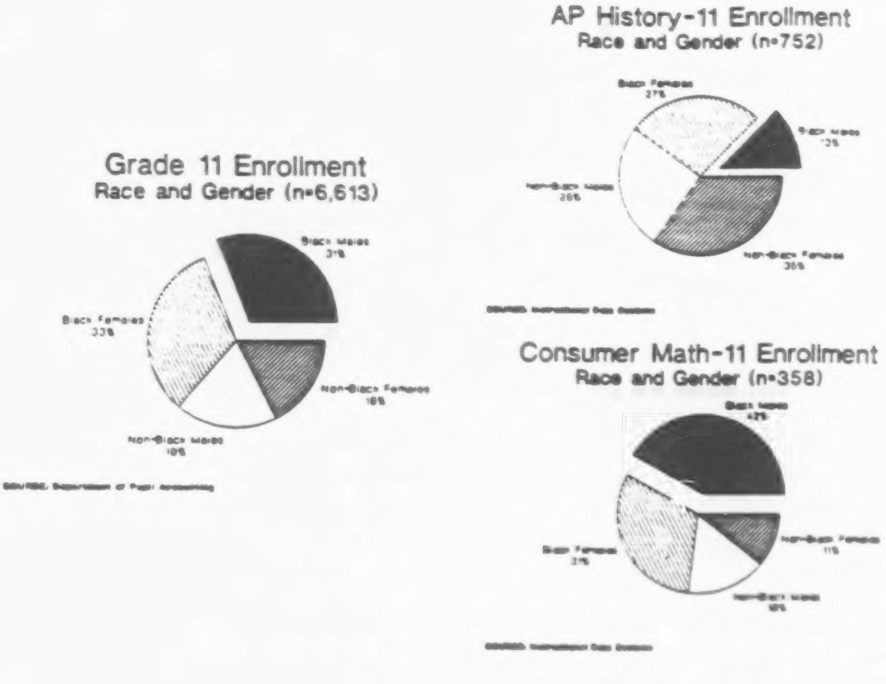


Figure 23 presents enrollment data for one challenging tenth grade science course and, for contrast purposes, one lower level math course. Biology for the talented and gifted shows similar patterns of disproportion as those in the geometry profile. Black males were underrepresented by nearly

20 percentage points, while non-black males and females were overrepresented by ten to fifteen points. Similar to their participation rates in ninth grade geometry, black females were within five percentage points of proportional representation in the most advanced tenth grade science course the school system has to offer. Though not directly related to the focus of this report, the participation rate of black females in advanced ninth and tenth grade science is encouraging and represents a major departure from the national enrollment trends which generally indicate a low participation rate for minority females in math and science.

Enrollment data for consumer math, considered a general track math course, shows that black males comprised a plurality of the course enrollment, 11 percentage points higher than their proportion of the total grade 10 enrollment. Black females, non-black males and non-black females were underrepresented in this course, ranging between two and seven percentage points under their normal proportion of the grade level enrollment.

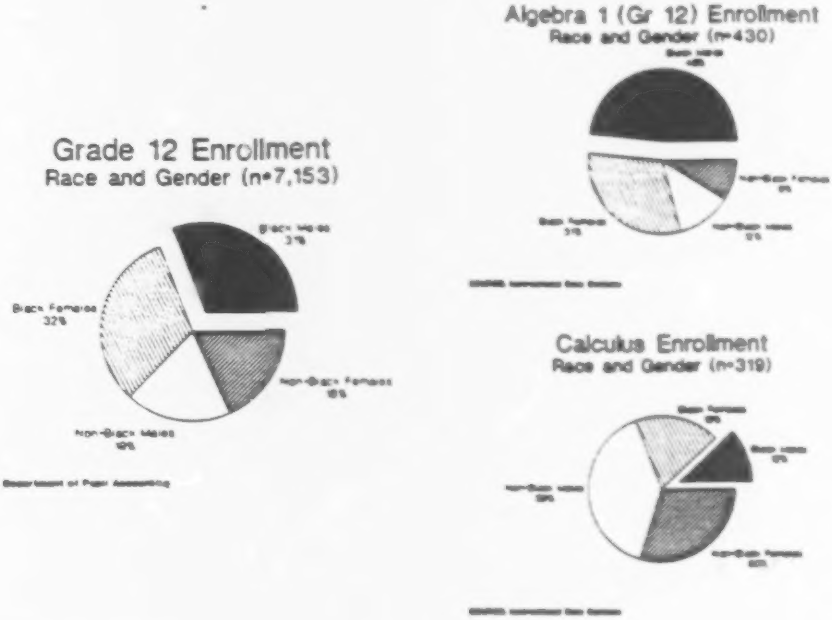
Figure 24



In Figure 24, the enrollment pattern of black and non-black students begins to repeat itself, suggesting that the system tends to grow more rigid as students move into upper grades. Selecting the same mix of courses as displayed in the tenth grade analysis---one challenging history course and one lower level math course---the results are almost identical. The Advanced Placement (AP) history course contained an 18 point deficit for black males[8]. Again, black females, while still below their normal enrollment distribution, were within six points of parity. Non-black males and females were overrepresented in this course by six and 17 points respectively.

Consumer math data were almost identical to the tenth grade enrollments for this course. This stands to reason given the tendency for the same students to take consumer math in tenth and eleventh grades in order to fulfill the County's graduation requirement of high school mathematics. Like the tenth grade consumer math profile, black males remain the only population over-represented in this course.

Figure 25



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[8] Deficits at the eleventh and twelfth grades carry even greater meaning because of the shrinking pool of black males in the upper grades. As a proportion of total enrollment black males drop from 34 percent of total in ninth grades to 31 percent in grades 11 and 12. Thus, an 18 point deficit means that black males make up only 13 percent of students in an eleventh grade course.

Figure 25 presents the course enrollment summary for the 1989-90 senior class for two math courses. These two courses---Calculus and Algebra 1---represent virtually opposite ends of the spectrum in terms of course content and post-graduate value. Steep enrollment deficits existed in calculus for black males which approximate the gaps seen in ninth grade TAG-English, tenth grade TAG Biology and eleventh grade AP History. Only 44 out of 2,197 black males in the 1989-90 senior class are enrolled in calculus. Black females are also significantly underrepresented, 13 percentage points below their grade level proportions. Non-black males are 20 points and non-black females are 12 points above their proportions in the grade 12 enrollment.

Of the 430 seniors enrolled in algebra 1, 48 percent were black males. Similar to enrollment patterns seen in consumer math courses in grades ten and eleven, black males are the only overrepresented student population in this low level math course.

While the plight of black males is the principal focus of this study, an equally revealing trend is the low participation rate for all secondary students in the most advanced courses offered in Prince George's County. For example, eighth and ninth grade TAG English courses served only about 10 percent of the cohorts at those grade levels during 1989-90. Only one in five sophomores is enrolled in Geometry. TAG Biology and TAG Chemistry enrolled 4 percent of sophomores and 5 percent of juniors, respectively. From a total of over 7,000 seniors, five percent were enrolled in calculus, the system's flagship math course; 2 percent took TAG-Physics. Granted, these are among the most advanced courses offered in the school system, yet the extremely low enrollment rates are symptomatic of problems at all grade levels Thus, the problem of course enrollments in the advanced sciences and mathematics and the talented and gifted programs, while most severe for black males, is one that pervades the entire high school institution, both in Prince George's County and beyond.

Upper elementary grouping trends predict middle and high school course enrollments. Enrollment patterns grow increasingly more rigid as students matriculate through the secondary schools. Based on an analysis of elementary student grouping practices, there is evidence that this sorting process begins sometime shortly after the fourth grade. At this point black males become significantly underrepresented in the upper level reading groups. This pattern is quite different from reading group practices prior to fifth grade which showed a generally proportional representation of black males in both the top and bottom groups.

Course participation rates followed a pattern starting in grade eight. There exists a strong inverse relationship between the level of the academic course and the enrollment of black males. Disparities are especially severe in the TAG, AP and other advanced courses in the math and sciences. Likewise, black males are overrepresented in courses such as consumer math, lower level history and mainstreamed special education courses.

The one interruption in this enrollment pattern exists in the 1989-90 eighth grade mathematics data. A change in policy prompted a surge in enrollment of eighth graders in algebra and pre-algebra, resulting in an immediate increase in the participation rate for all students in advanced mathematics, as well as an increase in the rate for black males.

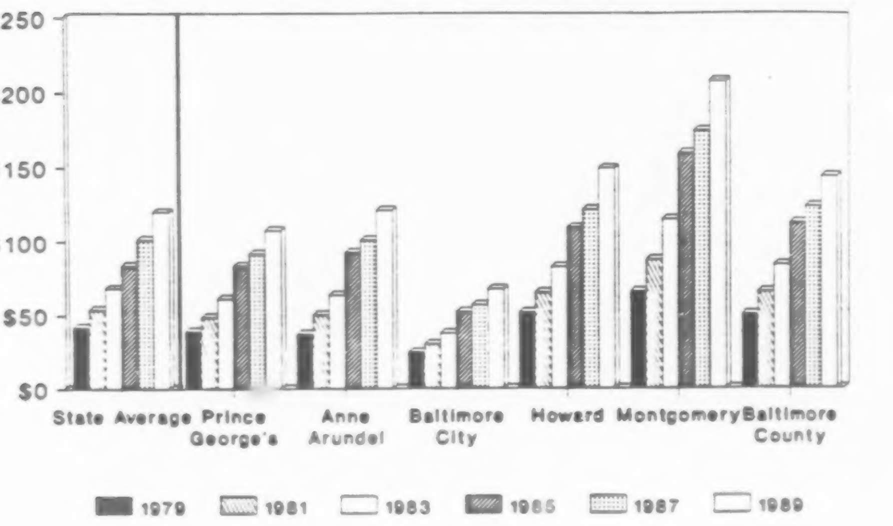
Chapter IV

School Finance Trends

This section presents an analysis of school finance data, the principal focus being the annual per pupil expenditures for the Prince George's County Public Schools and comparable spending rates for a sample of other school systems in Maryland. Also included in this discussion is an examination of the variances which exist between Prince George's and other school systems and a discussion of the probable causes for these differences. Other school finance characteristics, such as local wealth, percentage of local revenues devoted to education and starting teacher salaries, are presented to add some context to the school finance discussion.

A. County Fiscal Profile

Figure 26



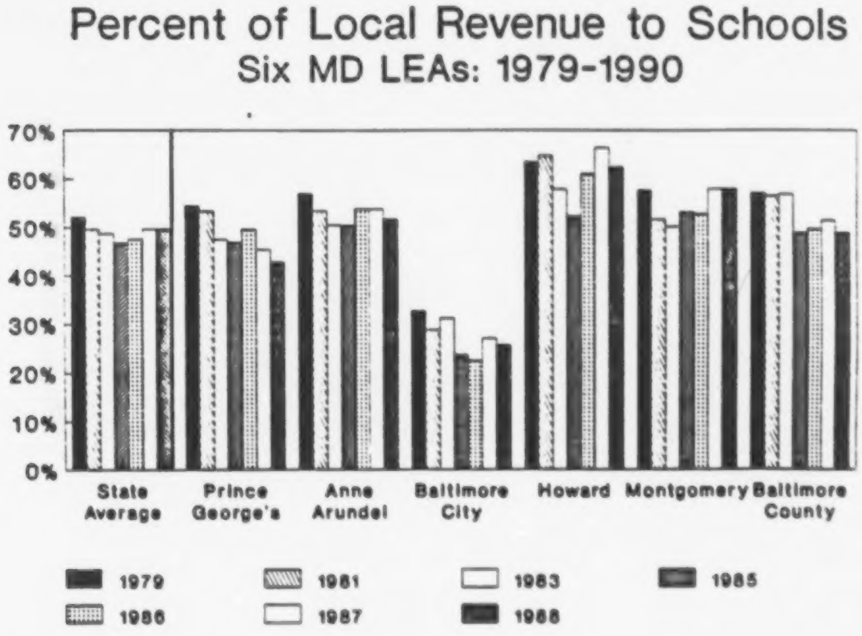
Assessed Valuation per Pupil: 1979-1989

Six Maryland Counties

SOURCE: MSDE 10-Year Financial Report

Figure 26 provides data on assessed valuation taxable at full rate for County purposes and calculated on a per pupil basis. In effect, this statistic represents the tax base upon which local authorities can generate property taxes, the principal local source of funding for public schools. Figure 26 shows that Prince George's County, slightly behind the assessment levels of other Maryland local educational agencies (LEAs) in 1979, caught up with the state average by FY1985; since that time, however, the County has again fallen behind. In FY1989 Prince George's had a per pupil assessment base which was only 90 percent of the state average. When compared to the other metropolitan jurisdictions in Maryland, Prince George's FY1989 assessed valuation per pupil was second lowest. At that time, assessed valuation for Prince George's County was 52 percent of Montgomery County's. Although not shown in Figure 26, in FY1988-89 Prince George's County ranked tenth overall in "assessed valuation per pupil" among the 24 Maryland LEAs[9].

Figure 27



SOURCE: MSDE 10-Year Financial Summary

Figure 27 presents the percentage of local revenues appropriated by county councils to support public elementary and secondary schools. Prince

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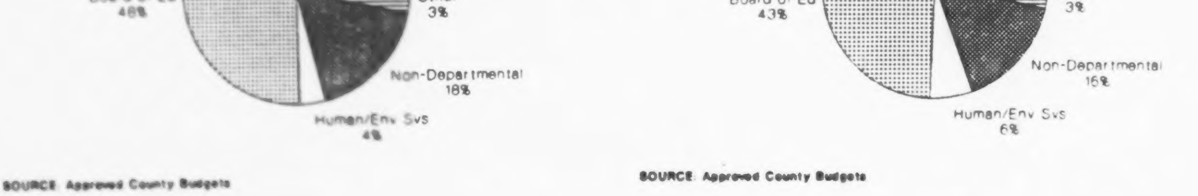
[9] See, **Selected Financial Data: Maryland Public Schools (1979-80 - 1988-89)**, Maryland State Department of Education, OMIS/RESSB.

George's County has experienced a ten-year downward trend beginning in FY1979 when 54.9 percent of local revenues were earmarked for education. By FY1988 this rate had dropped to 42.8 percent. This consistent downward spiral was interrupted only in FY1986. It was in this year that the County picked up the full cost of a 9 million dollar investment in Magnet and Milliken schools. In subsequent years federal and state revenues helped support the Magnet/Milliken cost. The other Maryland school systems in metropolitan Washington and Baltimore (and the state average) showed funding patterns which were more cyclical in nature--i.e., funding levels for schools tended to ebb and flow over the 10-year period rather than move steadily in one direction. Local comparisons from FY1988, the most recent data available, show that Montgomery County committed 57.9 percent of its local revenues to schools; schools in Howard County received 62.4 percent of the local revenue; Anne Arundel's schools received 51.7 percent, while the corresponding rate in Prince George's County was 42.8 percent.

Figure 28[10]



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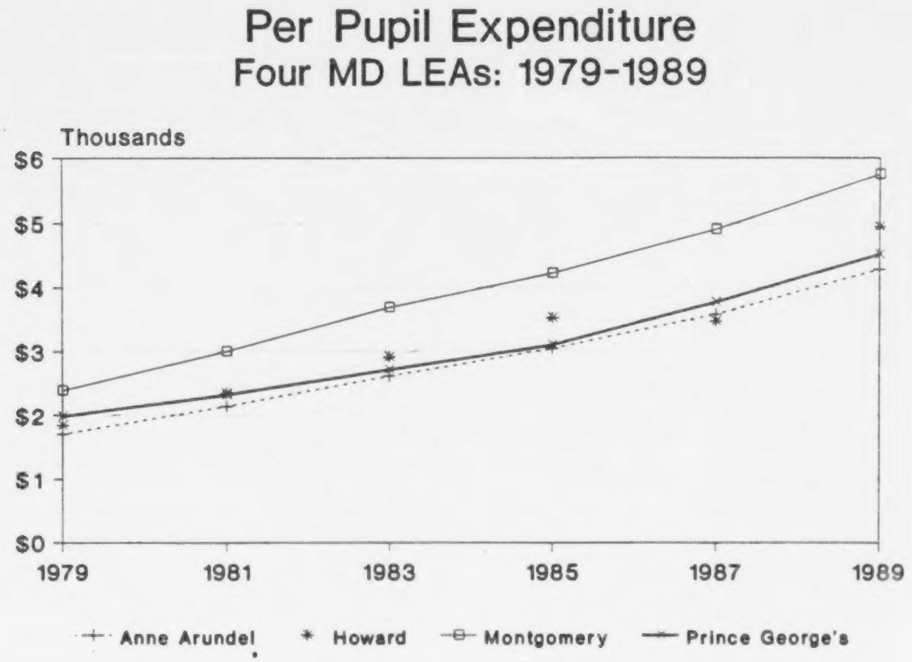
[10] Notes for Figure 28:
The "**Non-Departmental**" category includes appropriations for the following: Debt Service, Fringe Benefits, Grants and Transfers, and Contingency. The "**Other**" category includes appropriations for the Community College, Memorial Library and Cooperative Extension Service.

Figure 28 shows how the local revenues were apportioned among the major agencies in Prince George's County for FY1981 and FY1990. During this ten-year period, Prince George's County experienced a significant change in distribution pattern of local revenues to governmental agencies. "General Government", a category which includes the assorted offices of local government (County Executive, County Council, Office of Finance, Office of Personnel, etc.), increased over this period from 4.2 percent of the total local budget to 6.6 percent. The Criminal and Civil Justice agency, consisting of the Circuit Court, the State's Attorney, Office of the Sheriff and the Department of Corrections, increased from 3.1 percent of FY1981 local revenues to 5.6 percent of the FY1990 total. A related agency, Public Safety, containing the county police department, fire department and office of emergency preparedness, among others, grew from 14 percent of total to 15.3 percent. Another department which experienced a proportional increase during this period was the Department of Human and Environmental Services. This agency, which houses the Department of Aging, the Health Department, Department of Social Services, among others, realized an increase in its share of local revenue from 3.7 percent of the 1981 total to 6.2 percent of the 1990 budget.

With proportional increases of nearly nine percentage points in these four major agencies, other local functions by definition had to experience corresponding declines. The two agencies hit hardest by a decrease in their share of local revenues were Public Works, which dipped from 5.7 percent of total to 3.4 percent and the Board of Education, whose share dropped nearly five full percentage points between 1981 and 1990, from 48.3 percent of total to 43.5 percent. Returning momentarily to data on school poverty in Figure 11, it becomes apparent that the decrease in local funds to schools occurred during a period when the schools were beginning to serve higher concentrations of low income students.

B. Per Pupil Expenditures

Figure 29[11]



SOURCE: MSDE 10-Year Financial Summary

Figure 29 presents comparative data on total per pupil expenditures for the regular educational programs of Prince George's County and three adjacent Maryland LEAs. The Maryland State Department of Education classifies the "regular educational program" to include the cost of school administration, instruction, pupil personnel services, student health services, student transportation, operation and maintenance of the school plant and certain fixed charges. Excluded from this total are the following cost categories: Adult Education, Food Service Operations, Ongoing Transfers, Community Service and Equipment.

As shown in Figure 29, in the ten years since 1979 the cost per pupil in Prince George's County has increased at an average annual rate of approximately 14 percent. During this same period the per pupil expenditure gap between Prince George's County and Montgomery County has widened from about $400 in 1979 to $1,238 in 1989. Prince George's has also lost ground relative to spending in Howard County, where in FY1979 the average spending per pupil was $152 less than Prince George's. Ten years later, the cost per pupil in Howard County had outpaced that of Prince George's County by $430.

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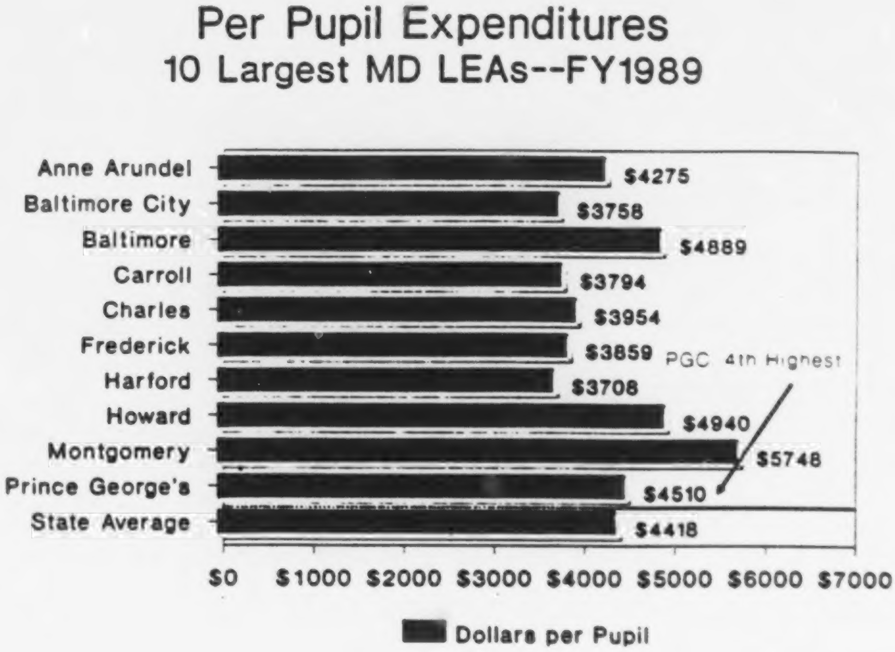
[11] The State Department of Education presents per pupil cost data in two forms. The figures used for this analysis excludes the state's contribution to the teacher retirement fund (an average of 12-13 percent of total) because the same data are not available for Figure 36--Per Pupil Cost by School Type.

Figure 30



Per Pupil Expenditures
10 Largest MD LEAs--FY1989

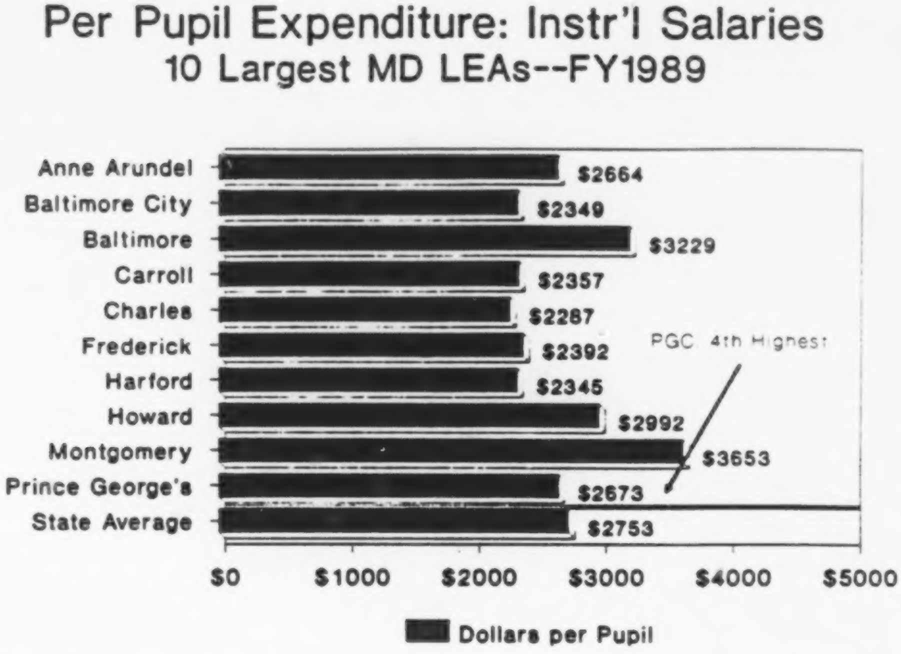
SOURCE: MSDE 10-Year Financial Summary

Figure 30 begins a series of micro-analyses of the per pupil expenditures for the ten largest school systems in Maryland. Figure 30 shows the average cost per pupil for the regular educational programs in these school systems. These are essentially the same data as those displayed in Figure 29, the only difference being that a larger number of districts are included in this latter comparison.

One important finding from Figure 30 is that in FY1989 Prince George's County maintained its ranking as the fourth highest per pupil cost among the ten largest school systems in Maryland. What follows is a more precise analysis of the total per pupil cost statistic. By disaggregating the total cost per pupil, the actual nature of spending for the various LEAs becomes clearer.

Accordingly, Figures 31 through 34 provide per pupil cost data for four types of educational expenditures: instructional salaries, instructional materials, textbooks and library books.

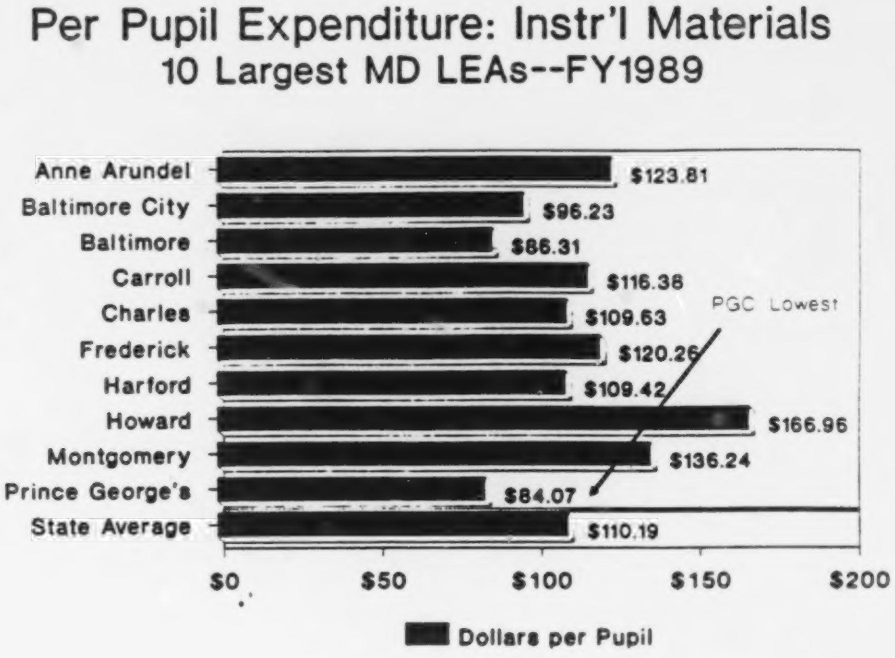
Figure 31



SOURCE: MSDE 10-Year Financial Summary

Figure 31 represents the first and largest element of the per pupil cost composite. Salaries for school administrators, teachers, and instructional support staff comprise the largest component of a school system's regular operating budget. During FY1989, Prince George's County spent $2,673 per pupil for instructional salaries. Not included in this statistic are benefits for instructional personnel. When staff benefits are factored in, the cost of school personnel grows to approximately 75 percent of the total per pupil cost. While the cost of instructional salaries in Prince George's County was $80 below the state average, it was also fourth highest among the ten largest Maryland LEAs. The three school systems which spent more per pupil in this cost area were Montgomery, Howard and Baltimore Counties.

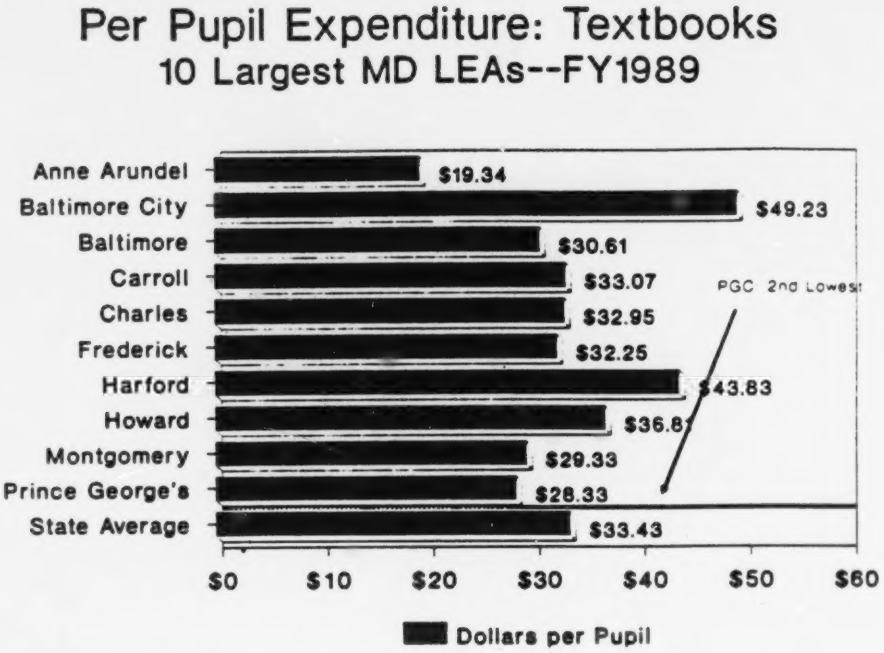
Figure 32



SOURCE: MSDE 10-Year Financial Summary

Figure 32 shows the per pupil cost of instructional materials, i.e. consumable supplies and learning materials for schools. For FY1989 Prince George's County spent about $84 per pupil for these purposes. That figure was the lowest among the ten LEAs featured in this analysis, 24 percent below the state average and 50 percent below that of Howard County.

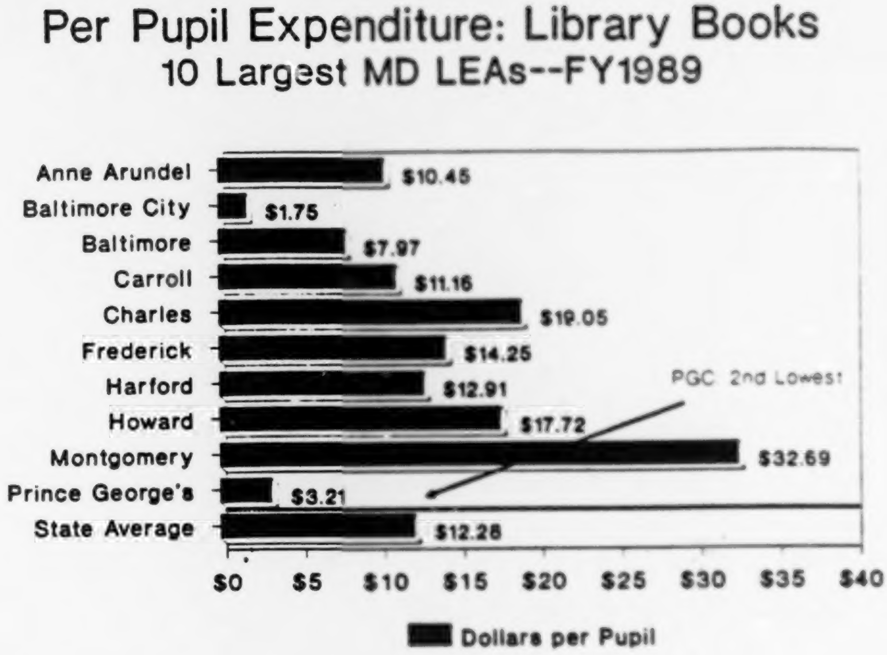
Figure 33



SOURCE: MSDE 10-Year Financial Summary

Figure 33 reports on the FY1989 per pupil cost for new and replacement textbooks. In this category, Prince George's ranked second lowest in the state and 15 percent below the Maryland average. It was also 23 percent below neighboring Howard County.

Figure 34

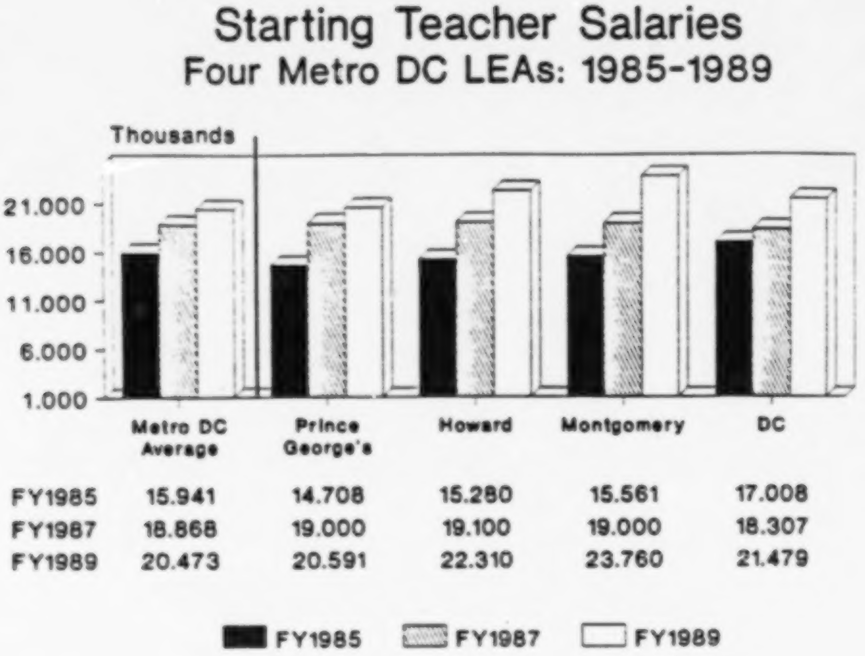


SOURCE: MSDE 10-Year Financial Summary

FY1989 per pupil costs for new library books is depicted in Figure 34. Prince George's County spent $3.21 per pupil to replenish the stock of library books and media center materials. Howard County allocated five times this amount for libraries; Montgomery County spent ten times the Prince George's amount. The Maryland average for library spending was $12.28.

C. Within District Disparities

Figure 35


Starting Teacher Salaries

Four Metro DC LEAs: 1985-1989

	Metro DC Average	Prince George's	Howard	Montgomery	DC
FY1985	15.941	14.708	15.280	15.561	17.008
FY1987	18.868	19.000	19.100	19.000	18.307
FY1989	20.473	20.591	22.310	23.760	21.479

SOURCE: Basic Information Guides, MABE

Figure 35 shows that just as a per pupil spending variance exists among school systems, there are within-district differences in cost per pupil as well. This is especially the case in school systems such as Prince George's County where students and parents can select from an array of educational programs. The Board's Budget Office computes a separate per pupil cost for the three types of schools in Prince George's County---Magnet, Milliken and Comprehensive schools. These figures are calculated by dividing the total budget allocation for the overall program by the number of students enrolled in the program[12]. For the current year, FY1990, the cost per pupil for comprehensive schools is $4,578. Magnet schools receive an average of per pupil allotment of $5,093 (+11%), while cost per pupil in Milliken schools is $5,267 (15%). For FY1991 the Budget Office has issued the following cost projections: Comprehensive schools, $4,943; M agnet schools, $5,424 (+10%); and Milliken schools $5,656 (+14%).

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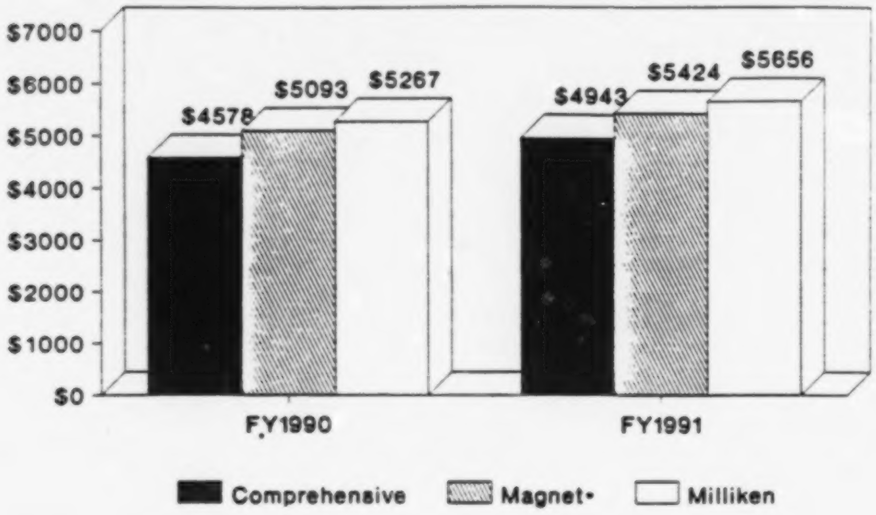
[12] Note that in calculating the cost per pupil for magnet schools, both magnet students and non-magnet students are included in the cost figure. For these schools, the benefits of enhanced resources, i.e. equipment, technology, supplies and staffing, accrue to both magnet students and students enrolled in the regular program.

D. Origins of Existing Disparities

Figure 36

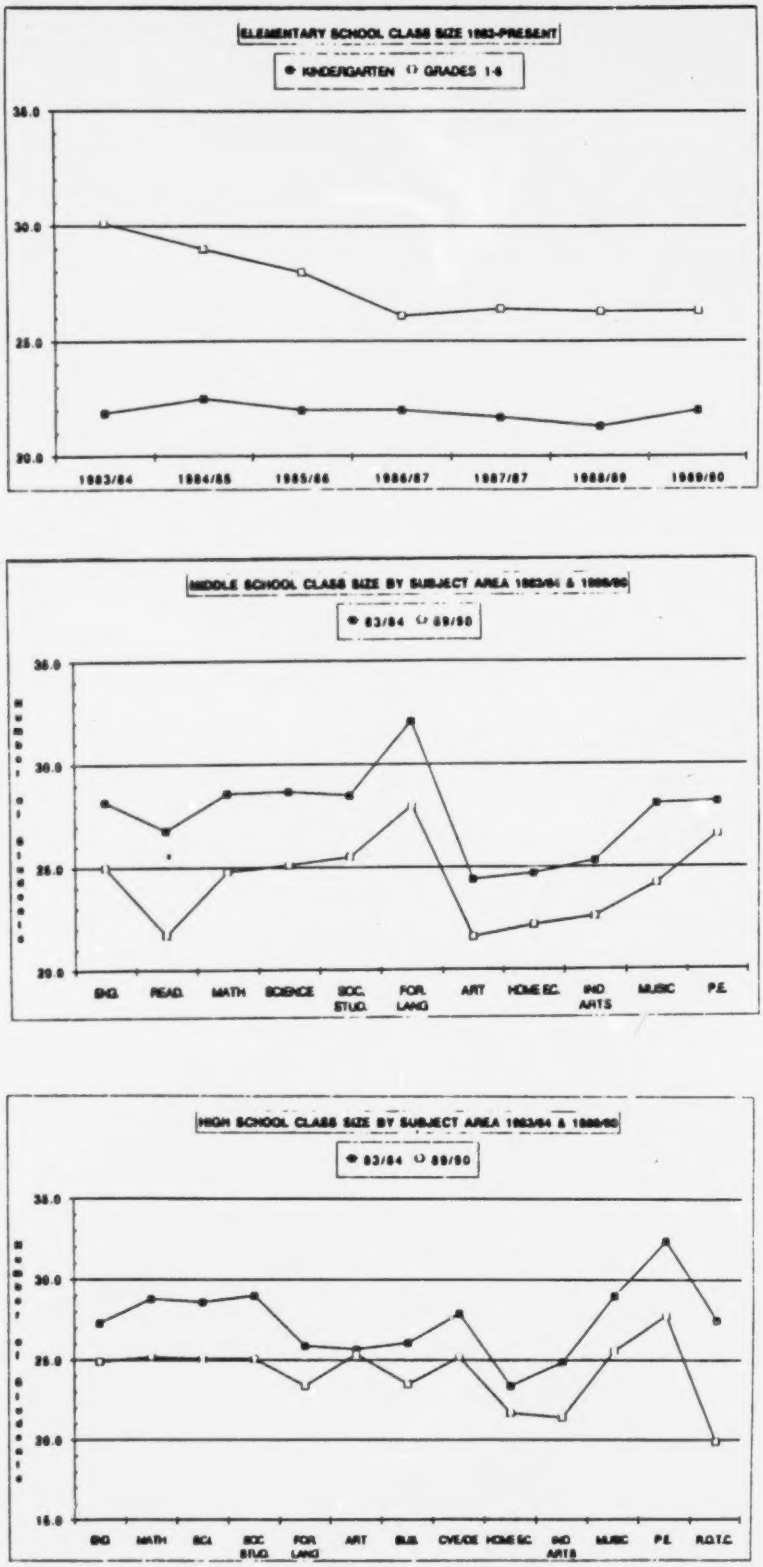
Per Pupil Expenditure in PGCPS
By School Type



SOURCE: Budget Office (PGCPS)

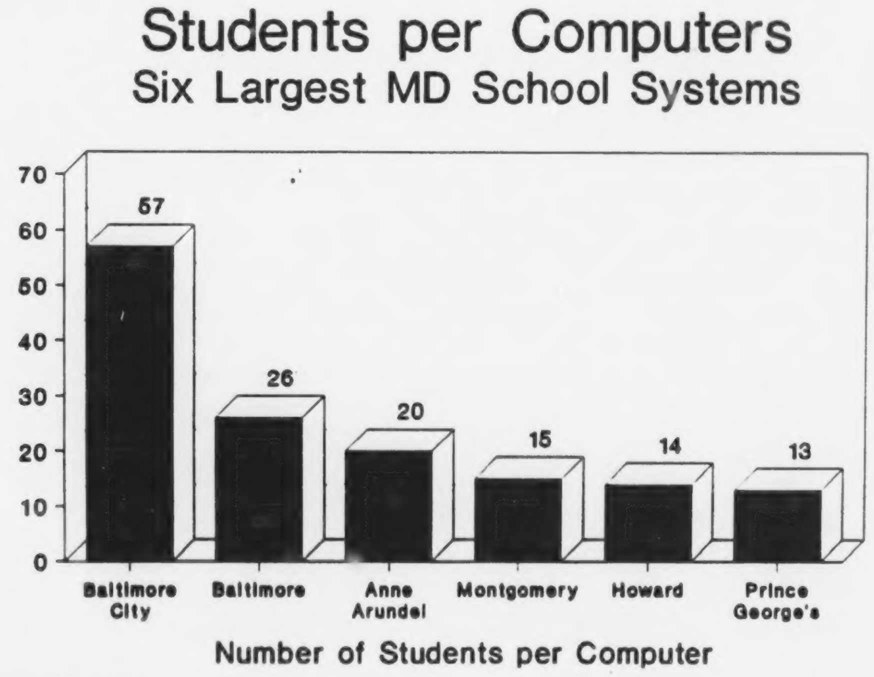
Data in Figure 36 through 38 provide some insight as to why significant differences in cost per pupil exist between Prince George's County and the other large Maryland LEAs. First, Figure 36 shows that beginning in 1984-85 the Board of Education of Prince George's County has increased starting salaries for teachers by 40 percent. During this same period, the Washington metropolitan average gain was approximately 28 percent. In FY1985 the starting teacher salary in Prince George's was $1200 below Metro-DC average; yet by FY1989, the system had climbed about $120 above the average. This development has allowed the Prince George's County Public Schools to become more competitive in the Washington, D.C. salary market.

Figure 37


ELEMENTARY SCHOOL CLASS SIZE 1983-PRESENT
● KINDERGARTEN ○ GRADES 1-6
35.0
30.0
25.0
20.0
1983/84
1984/85
1985/86
1986/87
1987/87
1988/89
1989/90
MIDDLE SCHOOL CLASS SIZE BY SUBJECT AREA 1983/84 & 1989/90
● 83/84 ○ 89/90
Number of Students
35.0
30.0
25.0
20.0
ENG.
READ.
MATH
SCIENCE
SOC. STUD.
FOR. LANG
ART
HOME EC.
IND. ARTS
MUSIC
P.E.
HIGH SCHOOL CLASS SIZE BY SUBJECT AREA 1983/84 & 1989/90
● 83/84 ○ 89/90
Number of Students
35.0
30.0
25.0
20.0
15.0
ENG
MATH
SCI.
SOC STUD.
FOR. LANG
ART
BUS.
CVE/DE
HOME EC.
IND ARTS
MUSIC
P.E.
R.O.T.C.

A second strategy of the Board in the mid-1980s which has significant cost implications was the reduction of average class sizes at all grade levels. Due to severe resource limitations in the late-1970s, the average class size in many elementary schools had swelled to over 30 students; similar overcrowding was true for middle and high schools, as well. As seen in Figure 37, starting in 1984-85 the Board embarked on a gradual reduction in the average size of classes. Five years later the average class size for all grade levels in the system was approximately 26 students. Reducing the average class size by four students in a system where the total enrollment is over 100,000 has enormous budgetary implications.

Figure 38



SOURCE: MSDE

Figure 38 shows that in 1985 Prince George's County began a long-term, comprehensive investment in instructional technology for all grade levels and school types. Since then the computer density in Prince George's has increased to 13 students per computer. This figure is significantly above the state average and higher than what the state has recommended as a goal for all LEAs. The Board's rationale for moving aggressively in the area of instructional technology was to provide students with the skills and knowledge they will need to compete in the workplace and university labs and classrooms. The use of computers in elementary schools provides additional academic engagement time for students in both the computer lab and classroom setting.

Since the mid-1980s, the Prince George's County Public Schools have become more competitive in attracting new teachers, the instructional setting is enhanced due to smaller class sizes and students at all grade levels are meaningfully engaged in some form of educational technology. However, this progress has come at some cost, the most notable being the fact that salaries for school staff are now consuming a larger portion of the system's operating budget. This has resulted in less available revenue for other purposes as was discussed in Figures 32, 33 and 34. Because this trend has continued over a five-year period, there has been a cumulative debilitating effect on the school setting, as evidenced by obsolete textbooks, broken equipment or worn learning materials, empty supply cabinets and libraries which lack current, relevant references and media aids.

In summary, since 1985 the Board of Education of Prince George's County has struggled to make significant improvements in its instructional program within restrictive financial conditions. One consequence of this effort is that the school system remains "materials-poor," as illustrated in data which show Prince George's expenditures per student for instructional materials, textbooks and libraries are among the lowest in Maryland. Over the years this has taken a cumulative toll, limiting the school system's capacity to provide some essential elements of a sound educational program. This is aggravated by local economic conditions of recent years in which the tax base has not kept pace with either neighboring jurisdictions or the Maryland state average. Moreover, there has been a steady reduction since FY1979 in the percentage of local revenues allocated to schools. Not only is the local revenue base expanding at a slower rate, but the proportion of local funds directed toward elementary and secondary schools has been on a downward spiral since 1979.

Chapter V

Black Male Achievement: A National Challenge

The preceding chapters described the characteristics of our county, the condition of our schools and the performance of our black male students in comparison to other groups. These data point to a number of significant problems that are striking in their similarity to the problems faced by African-American males and school systems across the country. A review of extant research on black male achievement nationally stuns even those cognizant of difficulties in their local communities. Studies examining the educational, social, and economic well-being of African-Americans depict an array of threats to the success of African-American men and, by extension, the black family and community.

African-American men and the Criminal Justice System

The recent attention given black males apart from black females, primarily has been motivated by the disproportionately large numbers of African-American men who are: (a) being murdered, (b) imprisoned, (c) committing suicide, and (d) involved in drug-related criminal activity. In the publication ***A Common Destiny: Blacks and American Society***, the National Research Council (1989) reported that:

- Homicide presently is the leading cause of death among African-American males between the ages of 15 and 34;
- The homicide rate for African-Americans between 15 and 24 years of age is six times greater than the rate for Whites in the same age group; and
- Although blacks represented 11.5% of the total population in 1983, they comprised 43% of all homicide victims.

The devastating impact of crime on black men and the larger African-American community is expressed in the following grim statistics (cf. Mauer, 1990):

- Twenty-three percent of black men in their twenties (as compared to six percent of White men of the same age) are under control of the juvenile justice system (i.e., on parole or probation, or in prison or jail);

- In direct contrast to white men, the number of young black men under control of the criminal justice system (609,690) exceeds the number of black men of all ages enrolled in college (436,000) in 1986; and

- African-American men constitute 6% of the total population but represent 45% of the inmate population in federal and state prisons.

Despite the notion reinforced in the last presidential election by the specter of Willie Horton, homicide, like other forms of crime such as robbery and assault, is primarily an intraracial event -- that is, the perpetrator and victim are generally members of the same race. As a result, the surge in drug-related murders and other forms of crime which have taken place in poor, inner-city communities recently, has been felt more severely by African-Americans because they are more likely than whites to live in such areas (cf. Education Research Bulletin, 1989). Homicide alone has an inordinately negative impact on the African-American community. The National Research Council estimates that the lives of black homicide victims are cut short by an average of 30 years. The lives of the victims, usually young men between the ages of 15 and 35, are ended at a time when most individuals are developing careers, pursuing higher education and forming families.

While the crimes portrayed daily in print and television media are appalling, it is important to note that these acts have a reach that extends beyond those involved in the immediate act. Crime afflicts poor African-American communities in two ways; first, it causes economic and material loss in the form of stolen or damaged property, family members and their wages lost to imprisonment or death, increased insurance costs, lower property values, and restricted credit from lenders (NRC, 1989). Second, extensive criminal activity fosters social havoc in a community in the form of increased fear and distrust, a growing sense of helplessness, and the disintegration of community pride and spirit.

The impact of crime in poor African-American communities extends beyond the borders of the inner city to affect the larger society. In purely economic terms, Mauer (1990) estimates that our nation spends $2.5 billion dollars per year to oversee the 609,000 black men under control of the juvenile justice system. This figure does not include indirect costs such as potential tax revenues lost due to imprisonment, or the costs society must bear to support families left behind when a man or woman is imprisoned. By comparison, it would cost $1.2 billion dollars (or less than half the amount currently spent on juvenile justice) to send 609,000 African-American men to this nation's finest (or most expensive) colleges and universities. The investment of $1.2 billion in the education of 609,000 black men would be more than repaid by the $64 billion dollars in tax revenues these individuals would generate over the course of their working lives (based on an estimate of $5,000 per year per individual). Unfortunately, our society continues to emphasize punishment over prevention, despite evidence showing that punishment has proven to be an ineffective and exceedingly expensive way to reduce crime (Mauer, 1990). As a nation, we remain more committed to constructing new prisons and hiring more police officers than to building more schools and hiring more teachers to educate our young.

The loss of significant numbers of African-American males during young adulthood is a growing threat to the economic viability of our society. Within the black community, this loss delays and, in many cases prevents, the development of families and productive lives. The prospects of a community experiencing this kind of damage to its social fabric, are dim, to say the least. Yet, the national response to the devastation taking place in poor African-American communities has not gone much beyond the search for an ideology responsible for current conditions. Republicans blame Democrats, and liberals blame conservatives. A new addition to the blame debate is the notion that the victim orientation of African-Americans, rather than racism or discrimination, is largely responsible for the circumstances under which they live (Steele, 1990).

Ironically, the absence of a concerted national effort to rebuild inner-city communities lends support to those arguing that the condition of African-American men is the result of a white conspiracy to destroy the black community. While this view may seem farfetched to white Americans, each day of inaction fuels the suspicions of blacks. These doubts only serve to heighten African-Americans' concerns about white racism and reduce the cooperation and trust between blacks and whites needed to spur the social and economic development of this society.

Economic Status of the African-American Community

The white community is not the only segment of society accused of an inaction in the face of the problems besetting poor African-Americans. Middle- and upper -income African-Americans have also received their share of criticism for doing little about the problems of poor blacks. The perceived lack of response of middle-income blacks to the needs of poor African-Americans has rekindled questions about whether the civil rights agenda encompasses the wants of poor African-Americans. This criticism has its roots in the historical debate between Booker T. Washington and W. E. B. DuBois, and was reborn in the sixties in the contrasting views held by Black Nationalists such as Malcolm X and Imamu Amiri Baraka and civil rights leaders, most notably, Dr. Martin Luther King and Whitney M. Young. The essence of this debate was, and remains, whether African-Americans would profit more by emphasizing economic self-sufficiency or from pursuing social integration and access.

The doubts many poor African-Americans have about the commitment of their middle- and upper-income counterparts, is tied, in part, to the growing economic and social gap between poor and well-off African-Americans. Between 1970 and 1986, the percentage of African-American families with incomes exceeding $35,000 per year expanded from 15.7% to 21.2% (cf. NRC, 1989; Brown et al., 1988; Wilson, 1987)). During these same years, the percentage of black families with incomes below $10,000 grew from 26.8% in 1970 to 30.2% in 1986. The economic fault within the black community is accompanied by social disparities as well. The National Research Council (1989), for instance, maintained that the African-Americans can be divided into a middle-class group which consists primarily of two parent households, and low-income families composed largely of single-parent households led by women. The disparate social realities experienced by poor and middle-income African-Americans are accentuated by the fact that poor blacks are concentrated largely in inner-city communities inhabited by other poor African-Americans. Middle-income blacks, on the other hand, have used income and federal laws against housing discrimination to join whites in suburban communities.

The economic and social differences between middle- and low-income African-Americans have weakened the bond of common interests and experiences that have held the black community together through so many hardships, for so many years. But, while there are considerable differences between low- and middle-income blacks, it is a mistake to view middle-class African-Americans as simply a "colorized" version of middle-class whites. The black and white middle-class communities continue to differ economically as well as socially. For instance, African-American families with annual incomes between $24,000 and $48,000 have 1/3 the net worth of white families at the same income level (Updegrave, 1989). Moreover, African-American working.women (working spouses) in middle- and upper-income families account for a greater share of family income than their female counterparts in families with similar income. In short, black middle and upper income families are less well-off than white families with equivalent income in wages.

In addition to being less well-off, the economic status of middle-class blacks is less stable than that of their white counterparts. The economic progress of the black middle-class has been built on public sector employment gains (advances in employment by federal, state and local governments). Thus, a majority of African-American professionals and a third of black managers are employed by federal, state or local governments (NRC, 1989). These advances are now being jeopardized by cutbacks in public sector employment spurred by pressures to reduce growing federal, state and local budget deficits. These data along with those presented in the previous paragraph suggest that the economic vulnerability and limitations of middle-class black America, in part, underlies the lack of support (perceived or real) this group has provided to poor African-Americans.

Given the harsh realities of life among the poor and the continuing struggles of middle-income African-Americans, the black community faces a continuing struggle as it reaches the close of this century. The gains of middle-class African-Americans must be secured through the creation of employment and business opportunities in the private sector. Concomitantly, intensive efforts must be undertaken to reverse the devastating effects chronic unemployment, undereducation, and social isolation have had on poor blacks.

The Educational Achievement of African-Americans

Perhaps more than any other group in this society, African-Americans have had enormous faith in the power of education to solve their social and economic ills. Through most of their history in this country, African-Americans have fought to overcome legal and de facto barriers to their educational attainment; and, unlike other groups in this society, African-Americans frequently have had to jeopardize their very lives to seek the ability to read and write. Despite this legacy of personal sacrifice and commitment to learning, the educational values of African-American families are often questioned by educators seeking to explain the persistent black/white achievement gap (e.g., Coleman et al., 1966).

Elementary and Secondary Level Attainment

In today's atmosphere of school reform and dissatisfaction with the education provided in our nation's public schools, the public has lost sight of the enormous strides made by African-American men and women over the last half of this century. During much of this period, the high school completion rate of African-Americans rose dramatically. In 1940, the median number of years of school completed by African-American men was 6.2 years. By 1980, this figure had risen to 12.6 years of school for African-American men (NRC, 1989). More good news is revealed in the results of the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP).

NAEP can be thought of as a national criterion-referenced test administered every four years by the Educational Testing Service through a contract with the U. S. Department of Education. NAEP surveys are given in reading, writing, mathematics, science and computer competence to a nationally representative sample of elementary and secondary students in three age groups (nine year olds, 13 year olds, & 17 year olds). Surveys in each content area (e.g., mathematics, science) are given at four year intervals.

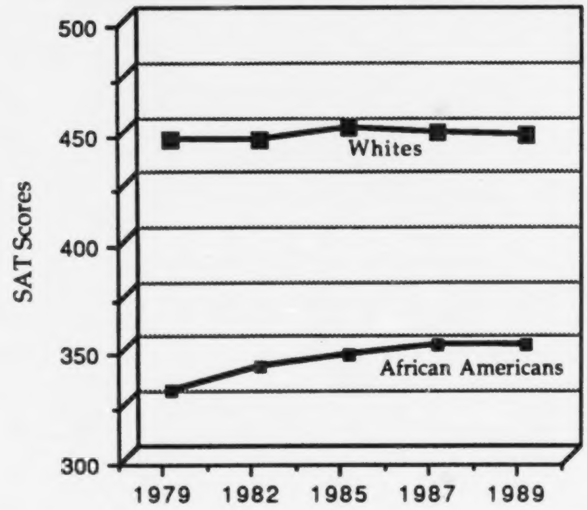
NAEP comparisons of the performance of blacks and whites between 1971 - 1984 in reading, 1973 - 1986 in mathematics, and 1969 - 1986 in science reveal that the achievement of African-Americans has improved more rapidly than that of their white counterparts in each of the three age groups surveyed. The sizable improvements made by African-Americans has served to narrow the performance gap between whites and blacks in mathematics, reading and science (see Applebee, Langer, & Mullis, 1989). While the black/white achievement gap has been narrowed, it has not been eliminated. Significant differences continue to exist between the average performance of whites and blacks in each content area (e.g., reading, mathematics). In concrete, rather than statistical terms, the results of the 1984 Reading Assessment revealed that the average black 17-year-old reads about as well as the average 13-year-old white student.

In short, the achievement gains made by blacks over the past thirty years still leaves their performance well behind that of their white counterparts. Moreover, the advances made by African-American students primarily have led to improved performance at lower proficiency levels in reading, mathematics and science. For example, forty-five percent of the 17 year-old white students tested in 1984 obtained reading proficiency scores at or above the Adept Level defined as the ability to comprehend, analyze, and summarize complex written information on familiar and unfamiliar topics; in comparison, less than twenty percent of the black 17-year-olds tested scored at or above this level. While the gains made by African-Americans are admirable, their current average performance levels, particularly for 17-year-olds about to enter college or the job market, fall short of the skills demanded by jobs in what is now an information and service-based economy and labor market (see Simmons, 1987).

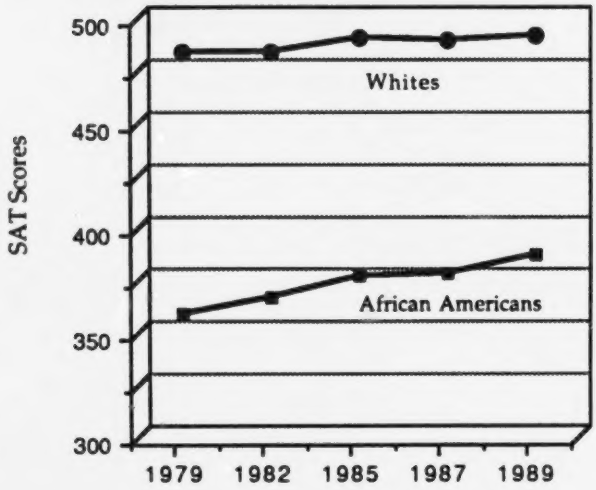
Similar patterns emerge when one compares the performance of white and black students on other indices of school achievement. Figure 39 shows the Verbal and Mathematics Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) Scores of African-Americans and whites in selected years between 1979 and 1989.

Figure 39

VERBAL SAT SCORES FOR AFRICAN AMERICANS AND WHITES: 1979 – 1989



MATHEMATICS SAT SCORES FOR AFRICAN AMERICANS AND WHITES: 1979 – 1989



Source: Adapted from The College Board, *Profile of SAT and Achievement Test Takers*

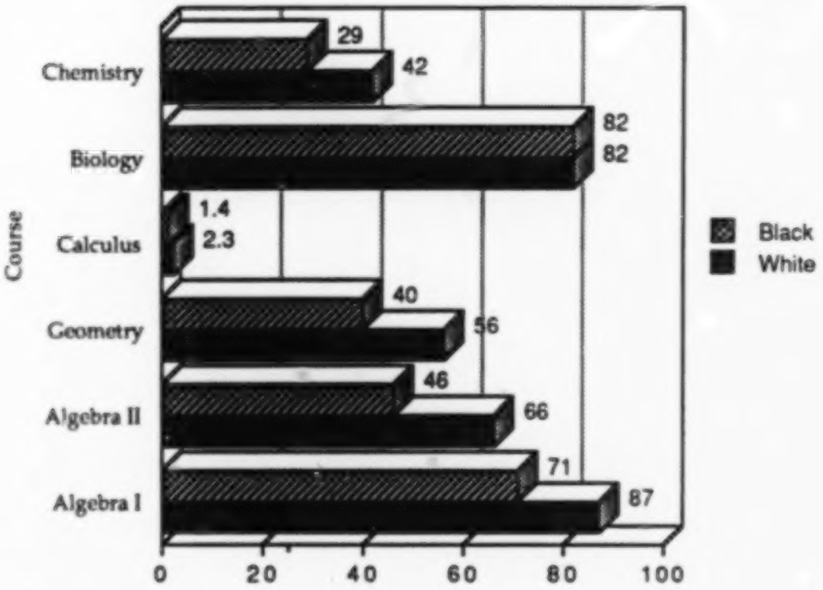
This figure reveals that, between 1979 and 1989, the average verbal and mathematics SAT scores for African-Americans rose more rapidly than the mean performance of white students in each area. During this period, the average performance for African-Americans rose by 21 points on the verbal portion of the test and 28 points on the mathematics segment. In contrast, the mean scores of whites rose only by 2 points on the verbal portion and by 8 points in mathematics during the same time span. Nonetheless, despite the relatively flat performance of whites and the gains made by blacks, in 1989, the mean score obtained by blacks on the verbal portion of the SAT was 95 points lower than the average achieved by white students. For mathematics, the mean score for blacks was 105 points lower than the average score of white students taking the test.

The pattern of black student improvement in the face of a persistent gap holds for other areas as well. For instance, while the gap between the high graduation rates of blacks and whites has narrowed over the past thirty years, blacks and whites leave high school with grades that differ considerably. For example, in 1984, 35% of all black high school graduates obtained a grade-point-average (GPA) of C+ or better, compared to 60% of their white counterparts (Education Research Bulletin, 1989).

The differences between the GPA's of white and black high school graduates is even more striking when one considers racial and ethnic-group differences in course taking patterns in high school. The graph below shows the percentage of black and white eleventh graders who report having taken selected mathematics and science courses (Policy Information Center, 1989).

Figure 40

PERCENTAGE OF WHITE AND BLACK STUDENTS WHO REPORT HAVING TAKEN SELECTED MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE COURSES



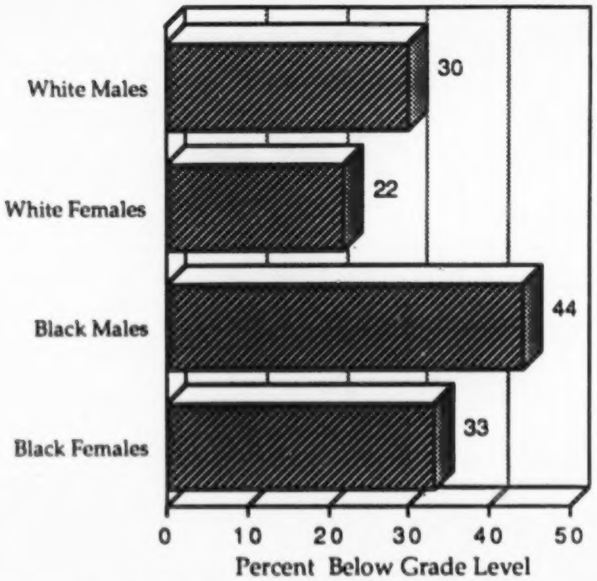
These findings reveal that in addition to earning lower grades, a smaller percentage of black, as compared to white, students take higher level mathematics and science courses in high school. The reported percentage of black students taking Algebra I and II are particularly alarming given a recent report (Pelavin & Kane, 1990) which found that taking and completing algebra and geometry is highly correlated with college matriculation. The declining numbers of African-Americans who report taking Algebra II as compared to Algebra I suggests schools need to do more to ensure that black students (as well as white students) have greater access to, and experience more success in, higher level mathematics courses given the relation between success in these courses and college attendance.

Racial and ethnic variations in course taking can be traced, in part, to the differential impact of ability grouping and tracking on our nation's black and white students. According to Oakes (1987) and others (cf. Slavin, 1988; Cole & Griffin, 1987), African-Americans are enrolled in disproportionately large numbers in special education programs (particularly those for the learning disabled and the educably mentally retarded), programs for the educationally disadvantaged (e.g., Head Start and Chapter 1), and in lower levels of the mainstream reading/English, mathematics, social studies and science curricula. In short, while African-Americans are more likely than ever before to complete 12 years of schooling, they are more likely than their white counterparts, to spend this time in curricular programs emphasizing basic skills remediation, as opposed to the acquisition of advanced knowledge and skills.

As disheartening as these data are for African-Americans as a whole, the situation worsens when one considers the performance of black males apart from their female counterparts. In almost every category where data are available, the performance of black males lags behind that of balck females as well as white males and females. The graph on the next page, for instance, shows that by age 13, the percentage of black males whose performance is one or more years below grade level is significantly greater than the proportion of black females, white males, and white females performing at similar levels.

Figure 41

PERCENTAGE OF 13-YEAR-OLD STUDENTS PERFORMING ONE OR MORE YEARS BELOW GRADE LEVEL



Source: The Carnegié Council on Adolescent Development

This pattern of restricted access to mainstream, higher level courses for blacks in general, and black males, in particular, constrains the educational potential of African-Americans and heightens quantitative (e.g, grades and test scores) and qualitative (exposure to various courses) differences in the school performance of whites and African-Americans. Leaving aside concerns for racial equity in education outcomes for a moment, one is still left with the onerous fact that the high school diploma earned by many of our nation's black students leaves them ill-equipped to enter college or pursue jobs with promising career paths after high school. Given the actuality that, between now and the year 2000 most new jobs will require some degree of postsecondary education (Johnston & Packer, 1987), the educational experience of a disproportionate number of African-American males prepares them for little more than second class citizenship.

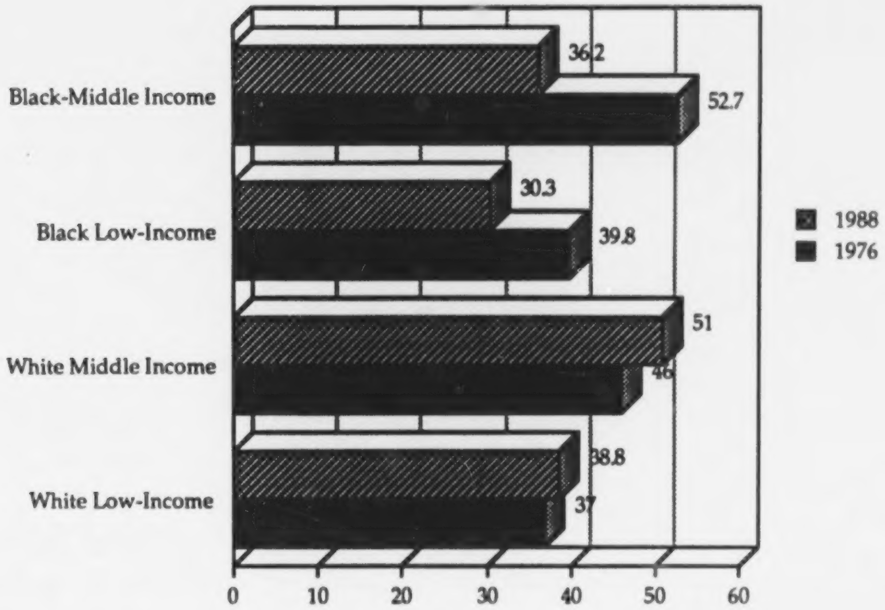
Today, a meaningful high school education for the college-bound and non-college bound alike involves exposure to, and success in, higher level mathematics and science courses (e.g., algebra & biology) as well as English and language arts curricula that provide students with adept oral and written communication skills. By these standards, many black students with high school diplomas leave school with skills that are not redeemable in the labor market or in institutions of higher learning.

African-Americans and Postsecondary Education

Postsecondary education is yet another arena where the experience of African-Americans and whites differs both quantitatively and qualitatively. A number of recent reports have pointed with alarm to the declining percentage of blacks enrolling in college and completing college, and obtaining advanced degrees (see, QEM, 1990; NRC, 1989; Carter & Wilson, 1989). Recent college enrollment statistics published by the American Council for Education (Carter & Wilson, 1989) reveal that the college participation rates for African-Americans fell by 12 percent between 1976 and 1987. During this same period the college participation rate of white students increased by 3.2 percent. Even more alarming is the fact that the college participation rate for African-Americans declined more sharply among middle-income as compared to low-income youth (see Figure 42).

Figure 42

COLLEGE PARTICIPATION RATES
1976 & 1988

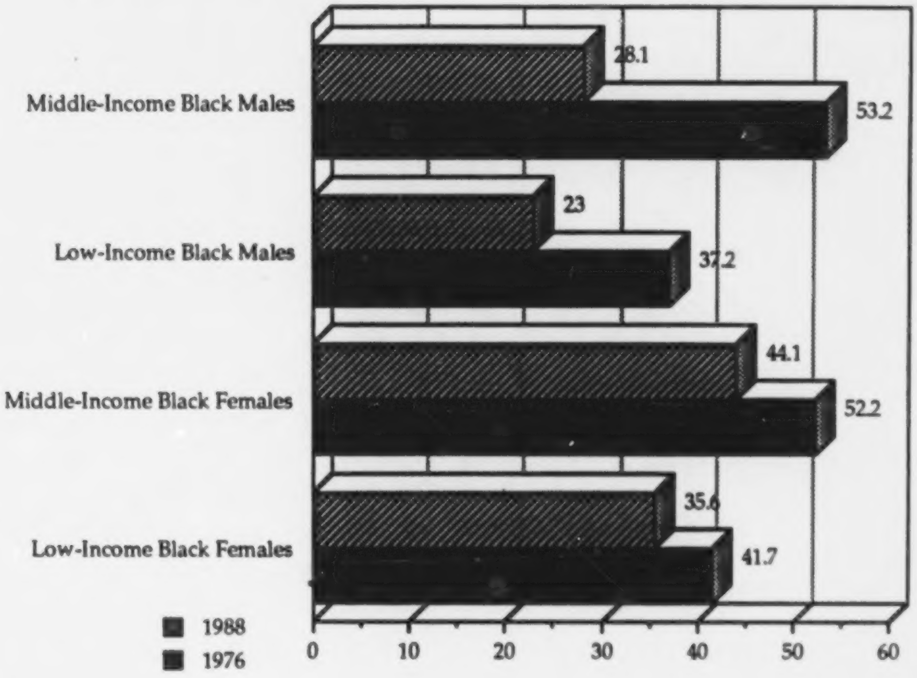


Source: Carter & Wilson, Table A-6

As Figure 43 shows, the general decline in college participation rates is sharpest among African-American males, regardless of income, in comparison to African-American females.

Figure 43

COLLEGE PARTICIPATION RATES OF MIDDLE & LOW-INCOME BLACK MALES & FEMALES



Source: Carter & Wilson, Table A-6

The declining college participation rates among African-American men and women is mirrored by a drop in the number of bachelor's, master's and Ph.D.'s earned by black men and women between 1976 and 1988. During this period, the number of bachelor's degrees earned by African-Americans fell by 4.3%, while the drop in master's degrees and Ph.D.'s was 31.8% and 22.1% respectively (Carter & Wilson, 1989). In each instance, the drop in the number of degrees earned by African-American males was more marked than the decline among African-American females. As in other instances, the declines in degree earned were greatest among African-American males.

The twelve years between 1976 and 1988 also witnessed shifts in the fields pursued by blacks and whites enrolled in college. According to Carter and Wilson (1989), "in 1987, the top three bachelor's degree fields for majority students were business, social science, and education; however, minority students were concentrated more heavily in business, social science and engineering." Moreover, the period between 1976 and 1988 saw African-Americans leave the fields of social science and education in unprecedented numbers. Carter and Wilson state that:

> "African-Americans" representation in baccalaureate and master's education and social science fields fell drastically between 1976 and 1987. The number of bachelor's degrees in education and the social sciences plummeted by 10,000 and more than 5,000 respectively. At the master's level, the corresponding numbers dropped by 7,000 and 400." (p.12)

They go on to report that the losses in education and the social sciences were not recovered entirely by gains in other fields. In addition, this is one trend where African-American females outdistance males. The rate of African-American women leaving education and the social sciences exceeded that of African-American men. In addition, African-American women appeared to have branched out into other fields more so than their male counterparts.

While blacks have been leaving the social sciences and education for other fields, it is still the case that they are sorely underrepresented in the physical sciences and in engineering. Nationwide, in 1988, 5,309 doctorates were conferred in the physical sciences and another 4,190 doctorates were awarded in engineering. Of these, African-Americans received 69 doctorates in the physical sciences and 67 doctorates in engineering (Carter & Wilson, 1989). The migration of blacks from the social sciences and education is not, at this point, being offset by commensurate gains in advanced degrees earned in the physical sciences and engineering, two areas where our country sorely needs new talent.

Summary

The national picture of black male achievement contains a few bright spots in a bleak landscape. The educational, social and economic gains made by African-Americans during the last half of this century are slowly being eroded by a society that is changing at a pace that outstrips the progress of African-Americans. More specifically, the ability of African Americans to compete in, and contribute to, the new economy is being undermined by an educational system that lags in its ability or willingness to provide African-Americans with the skills needed to be productive citizens.

The mismatch between what society needs and what it equips many African-Americans to do is having a disproportionately negative effect on African-American men. Shut out of the mainstream, large numbers of these men subsist in the underground economy where their existence is interrupted by periodic sojourns in our nation's jails and prisons. The loss of these men to the mainstream fabric of life contributes to worsening poverty in the black community as a whole, and to poverty whose face is increasingly feminine and youthful.

Ironically, these men and the strong families they could potentially create are being lost at a time when our society is becoming more dependent on its minorities than ever before. The future of America now depends on its ability to make all of its people great. The African-American community has seen the growth of a prosperous, though fragile middle-class, alongside poor people sinking in violence and despair. African-Americans must confront the challenge of strengthening themselves from within, while acquiring their fair share of resources from the larger society to make this task easier.

Our nation's task is to rid itself of false myths and homilies that support the current lack of action and concern for the poor and less fortunate. This nation's greatness has always come from its people. Weakness among any of its people augurs the decline of this society as a whole. Strengthening our people and our nation will require a renewed commitment to education, in dollars as well as ideas. Better early childhood education and healthcare is an essential feature of an effort to eliminate gaps before they begin. In addition, we must reassess the moral and spiritual infrastructure of this society. What are our values and what priorities should we set in light of these? In the recent turn away from excessive materialism, we have begun to rediscover the importance of family and community, and the value of learning as opposed to the quest for educational credentials.

The African-American community has suffered disproportionately from the materialism, "meism" and Social Darwinism that has permeated this society over the last ten to fifteen years. Our country, as well as the world, seems to be on the verge of setting a new and more positive course. The African-American community cannot be blamed if it views the current climate with a mixture of hope and apprehension. Clearly, however, African-Americans must take the lead in restoring their community. African-Americans must build from within while working to acquire support from the broader society.

Chapter VI

New Directions and Initiatives

The work of the Black Male Achievement Committee is leading the school system to reexamine its efforts to ensure that students receive the support needed to maximize their potential. The evidence presented in the previous chapters demonstrates clearly that too many African-American males are failing to fulfill their potential in school and the larger society. Fortunately, Prince George's County Public Schools may not have to look too far afield to find corrective measures. The school system currently possesses a number of innovative programs which, if strengthened and expanded, may reverse the academic fortunes of black males and enhance the achievement of other students as well. The Milliken school program has already been discussed in this regard so it will not receive further discussion at this point.

A. PGCPS Multicultural Education Initiative

In 1988, the school board adopted the recommendations of the Multicultural Education Task Force, a group of school and community leaders who examined the extent to which the instructional strategies and curricula employed by PGCPS met the needs of a culturally diverse student population. The Task Force recommended that school staff be trained to use a more diverse set of instructional strategies such as cooperative learning, and that the perspectives and experiences of women, African-Americans, and other underrepresented groups (e.g., the disabled) should be infused throughout the curriculum. Testimony given at the various hearings held by the Black Male Achievement Committee has caused the school system to redouble its efforts in this area.

Six curriculum writing teams will be working over the next three years to infuse the experiences and perspectives of African-Americans and other cultural groups into the social studies, English/Language Arts, Reading, science, mathematics, and art curricula across grade levels (kindergarten to grade 12). This effort will involve using material about and developed by African-Americans and women to meet curricular objectives consistent with those emphasized by school reform advocates and the effective schools movement (i.e., the development of critical thinking skills, the attainment of higher levels of achievement in science and mathematics, and enhanced oral and written communication skills).

To ensure that this effort encompasses classrooms throughout the system, the Superintendent has asked each school to identify a team comprised of parents, teachers and administrators who will guide and monitor multicultural education efforts at the local school level. These teams attended a three-day workshop held in August, 1990, where they interacted with local and national experts on multicultural education including Dr. Asa Hilliard, Dr. Samuel Betances, Dr. Francis A. J. Ianni and Dr. John Ogbu. In addition, representatives from school districts in Portland, Oregon, Indianapolis, Indiana and Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania shared their experience and resources concerning multicultural education initiatives in their school systems.

Finally, the Black Male Achievement Committee has agreed to use $500,000 of the $2 million the County Executive appropriated for black male achievement, to purchase library books and materials for each school that highlight the contributions and experiences of African-Americans. These efforts are designed to broaden students' understandings of the important role played by Africans, African-Americans and women in the development of this nation and the world. The leaders of our school system and community maintain that this knowledge will advance intergroup understanding and respect, and demonstrate that academic excellence is within reach of all students.

B. Efforts to Reduce Grouping and Leveling

Critics of traditional grouping and tracking policies (e.g. Oakes, 1987) maintain that there is little evidence that grouping and tracking does what it is designed to -- provide students with the level of instruction needed to increase their achievement. Instead, tracking and ability grouping often creates a system of educational apartheid in which the best teachers and materials are reserved for a small group of students, while the vast majority of students receive a curriculum that places them further and further behind with each year in school. During the 1989-90 school year, Dr. Murphy required middle and high schools to reduce the number of curricular levels of English and social studies (there are now 9 different levels of English and social studies being taught in many schools) being offered and introduce grading and instructional strategies that will encourage more students to excel. As part of this process, schools must eliminate ineffective uses of tracking -- those which do not lead to increased achievement of students as measured by improved performance on criterion-referenced tests, among other indicators (e.g., grades, attendance, student work portfolios). In support of this effort, staff development activities in the coming years will emphasize strategies (e.g., peer tutoring, cooperative learning, internships) and resources (computer applications and instructional software, interactive television) that will help teachers work with student in groups that are more diverse achievement-wise than is the case currently.

C. Secondary School Restructuring

Eliminating ineffective uses of tracking in middle and high school is one piece of a larger effort to strengthen the secondary school curriculum and change the impersonal nature of middle and high schools. Over the past year, a number of middle and high schools have piloted educational innovations such as creating teams of teachers and students that work together over a two-year period and establishing schools within schools to enhance contact among students and between groups of students and their teachers.

In addition, teams of school-based and central office personnel are examining national and state education policy in an effort to identify a core curriculum that all students should master prior to leaving school. At present, state high school graduation requirements are broad enough to enable students to receive a high school diploma without ever having taken chemistry, geometry or many of the courses now viewed as essential for success in today's society. Moreover, with 1600 courses offered in PGCPS' high school curricula, the average high school student would need a computer program to separate the wheat from the chafe. The effort to establish a strong core curriculum is designed, then, to ensure that students, counselors, parents and teachers have a clear understanding of the academic preparation needed to become an educated citizen. This process will result in a new definition of "minimal competencies," the exposure of more students to advanced levels of the curriculum, and greater support for students' affective and social development as part of their educational experience.

D. Middle School Mathematics Initiative

National research on course enrollment trends in secondary school indicate that algebra acts as a gateway to advanced level courses in mathematics as well as English, social studies and science (Carnegie Foundation, 1989). Taking and successfully completing algebra increases the likelihood that students will go on to take geometry, trigonometry and calculus, in addition to enrolling in higher level science courses such as biology and chemistry. Prior to 1989, however, most PGCPS secondary students either did not take algebra, or took it too late (e.g., in 11th and 12th grade) to garner exposure to other advanced level courses. This outcome was, in large measure, due to the use of excessively restrictive and, in some cases, inappropriate criteria for placing students on the "algebra track" in middle school. In reviewing previous policies, Dr. Murphy found that cognitive ability (intelligence) tests given in 5th grade were used to make judgments about whether students should be taking algebra or not. The criteria employed prior to the 1988-89 school year reflected the belief that algebra and other high level courses were not for everyone, only the best and the brightest students. This notion was in direct conflict with recent analyses of the workplace which reveal that algebra and other advance level courses represent the "new basics" that must be mastered by most, if not all, students (cf. Simmons, 1987).

In accordance with new educational realities, the school system has changed its criteria for placing young people on the "algebra track." Currently, if a student masters 70% of the objectives on the sixth grade mathematics criterion-referenced test and receives a C grade or more in math, counselors must recommend that they take pre-algebra in seventh grade. This shift in policy has increased pre-algebra and algebra enrollment significantly in middle school, an increase that should lead to higher enrollments in upper level math courses (geometry, trigonometry and calculus) as this year's (1989-90) group of 7th and 8th graders go on to high school.

E. Elementary School Reading Project

Since the 1950's, 90 minutes a day of classroom time in elementary schools have been devoted to reading instruction. Teachers have traditionally divided their classes into 3 reading groups that vary in ability. Under the 90 minute, 3 reading group design, each group receives approximately 30 minutes of direct instruction (teacher working directly with students) and 60 minutes of independent seatwork. In analyzing this arrangement, school staff concluded that average and below-average students required more than 30 minutes of direct instruction per day to develop their reading skills. As such, elementary teachers have been asked to organize their classes for reading instruction in such a way as to guarantee that each student receives 60 minutes of direct instruction. Teachers have been given the freedom to decide how this will be done. In some cases, teachers may reduce the number of reading groups from 3 to 2; in others, teachers may increase the amount of time students spend receiving direct instruction delivered by educational technology during the course of the classroom period devoted to reading. Regardless of the strategy used, the major goal is to increase the amount of support students receive in their efforts to become literate. This shift in direction should be particularly beneficial to students who need additional help in reading, a disproportionate number of which are black males.

F. College Board's Equity Project

This past June, the College Board invited Prince George's County Public Schools to join 5 other school districts (school districts in Fort Worth, Texas; San Jose, California; Milwaukee, Wisconsin; Lowell, Massachusetts, and Nashville, Tennessee) in a five year, 16 million dollar project designed to increase the number of our nation's students who are adequately prepared for college. Citing recent research showing that algebra and geometry are the keys to the college preparatory curriculum, the Equity Agenda Project promotes strategies that will ensure that all of the students in the participating school districts will have completed algebra and geometry successfully by the third year of high school.

To achieve this goal, the project will provide a two-week training institute for all eighth grade math teachers in the 6 school districts. This training will focus on new instructional strategies and materials that make algebra and geometry more accessible to a greater number of students. In addition, the project will provide training institutes for middle and high school counselors designed to increase their sensitivity to the special needs of today's students.

Prince George's County Public Schools, like the other school districts involved, will work to see that all eighth grade teachers will be available for training. In addition, the school system has agreed, with the support the College Board, to establish college and career resource centers in each school and to provide math tutors for students who request additional assistance. This project will help provide the resources and training necessary to address one of the Black Male Achievement Committee's major charges -- ensure that more students, particularly black males, are exposed to, and experience success in, advanced levels of the mathematics, science, English and social studies curricula.

G. Mentors for Students

The Black Male Achievement Committee noted the need for more role models for students, particularly African-American role models. A number of businesses and organizations have provided mentors to work with elementary, middle and high school students. In addition, a number of schools have established internal student mentor programs whereby school staff work with a small group of students.

These efforts are expanding and are laudable. In the past, however, little has been done to train mentors and to provide school staff with guidance about the most effective ways to use volunteers to work with students. During the 1990-91 school year, the school system will obtain a mentoring programs specialist who will coordinate school system efforts in this area and develop a training program for mentors and school staff who work with mentors. The mentoring specialist will be assisted in this effort by a consultant group, Mentors Incorporated, which specializes in mentor recruitment and training. Concerned Black Men, Inc. of the Washington

Metropolitan Area, has also expressed a strong interest in establishing a systemwide mentoring program in Prince George's County Public Schools.

These are but a few of the efforts the school system is making to see that all students, including African-American males, receive the kind of education needed for them to lead productive lives. The committee understands that the school system will develop an action plan by the end of September, 1990, that will discuss in detail its response to the recommendations of the committee. During the coming year the BMAC will work with school staff, the school board and members of the broader community to identify ideas for next steps and monitor student and school system performance ideas.

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